

Walter Halls Primary and Early Years School

Querneby Road, Mapperley, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG3 5HS

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2017

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

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has inspired and organised many improvements to the quality of education pupils receive. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress. Progress in reading and mathematics is stronger than in writing.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate view of the school and know exactly where to focus school improvement activities. The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Governors play their part in ensuring that the school is focused on improving pupils' academic and personal development.
- Outstanding procedures for staff development have ensured that teaching and the use of assessment are now consistently good.
- Children make a good start to their school life in the early years and, by the end of Reception, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils, those at the early stages of learning English and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the effective extra support they receive.
- The curriculum provides particularly well for pupils who find learning difficult, but it is less effectively modified to fully meet the needs of the most able. Even more could be expected of these pupils on occasions.
- Pupils benefit from an interesting and varied range of out-of-school clubs and a well-judged programme of visits that enhance their understanding and experience.
- The school knows all the pupils well. Pupils are kept safe and are well supported and cared for. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils, especially the older ones, show a good understanding of British values. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and life beyond school.
- Pupils concentrate in class, work hard and enjoy learning. They are polite and well mannered. Playtimes and assemblies are happy times and pupils behave well.
- The great majority of parents regard the school highly.
- High expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct and a consistently implemented behaviour policy result in pupils behaving well and enjoying school.
- Rates of attendance have improved but rates of persistent absence are still too high for a few pupils and this slows their progress.
- Pupils do not sufficiently develop their writing skills, particularly their extended writing skills, across a suitably broad range of subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning to outstanding by:
 - continuing the upward trend in pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils undertake more extended writing and apply and develop their writing skills in a wide range of subjects
 - ensuring greater modification of the curriculum and teaching to fully meet the needs of the most able pupils
 - further reducing rates of persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has done much to improve leadership and management since the school was last inspected. Leadership roles are effectively shared among staff. All staff work consistently and effectively as a team. Staff are fully committed to improving pupils' academic and personal development and are motivated to improve the school. Governance has improved so that governors now contribute to improving the school.
- The school has improved substantially over the last two years. Leaders know the school inside out and the school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Staff now receive excellent support and guidance on how to carry out their roles. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed clear policies and procedures in key aspects, such as how pupils' work is assessed and marked or how pupils' behaviour is managed. All staff are helped to fully understand these procedures and they implement them consistently and effectively. Staff value the guidance they receive.
- The school has effective systems to ensure that teachers assess pupils' work accurately. A particular strength is the regular meetings when teachers meet phase leaders to discuss the progress of each pupil in their class, concentrating on those who are at risk of not doing their best. Following these meetings, additional support is allocated to those who are most in need. This regular programme of meetings has played an important part in improving pupils' progress, especially that of those who find learning difficult.
- Senior, phase and subject leaders regularly check that teachers are working effectively and in line with school policies. However, leaders' observation reports and analyses of pupils' work rarely provide a clear analysis of the progress of different groups of learners.
- The headteacher has drawn effectively on external support such as that provided by the local authority. Good-quality challenge and support have been provided, especially in the area of monitoring and evaluation.
- The curriculum has been appropriately focused on improving pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Other subjects have not been ignored however. Pupils enjoy their weekly Spanish lessons. They are also keen to participate in physical education and games and many enjoy the school's music teaching. Pupils are proud of the quality of their performances at events such as harvest festival or Christmas. Leaders have begun some useful work to ensure that science has a more prominent part in the school's curriculum.
- The school is committed to serving all its pupils equally and the curriculum is effectively modified to meet the learning needs of all. A lot of additional support is provided through the school's wise use of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are now making much better progress than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Although the curriculum is sometimes varied to meet the needs of the most able pupils, at other times they could cope with more challenge to fully meet their needs, especially in writing.

- The curriculum for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. The school spends its funding for these pupils well and these pupils receive regular good-quality support to meet their needs, both in class and during additional sessions. Several parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were keen to tell inspectors of their admiration for the way that the school supports their children's often complex needs.
- A good range of extra-curricular clubs adds to pupils' enjoyment of learning, especially, but not only, in sport and music. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide programme of visits and visitors. For example, Year 6 pupils attend a week-long session entitled 'In to university', which helps them learn new skills and aim high. An extensive programme of residential visits is provided each year.
- Primary sports premium funding is also used well to enhance the quality of the curriculum provided for physical education and games. Teachers have worked alongside coaches and therefore improved their teaching skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their good understanding of British values help prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Through lessons and assemblies, pupils learn about different issues such as relationships, diversity, equality and human rights. They also learn about the wider community and about tolerance, democracy and the rule of law.
- Reading has a strong place in the school's curriculum. In Reception and key stage 1, good-quality phonics lessons are helping raise standards in reading and spelling. Special programmes and support are provided for pupils who struggle with reading and they soon begin to develop their skills and confidence as readers. Teachers and teaching assistants often listen to readers and pupils receive regular good-quality guided reading sessions. Reading standards are rising well throughout the school. All groups of pupils, including the most able, are supported well in their reading.
- Almost all the parents who inspectors spoke to are satisfied with the school and many hold it in very high regard, especially the way that the school looks after their children and keeps them safe. The school's website provides a high-quality resource for parents.

Governance of the school

- Governors are effectively involved in the strategic direction of the school. They carefully and professionally consider such issues as becoming an academy and make their judgements based on what would be best for the pupils.
- Governor training is effective and helps governors carry out their roles well. New governors are beginning to be confident and effective as governors.
- The governing body is well organised into committees. Specialist governors for such key issues as safeguarding often bring a great deal of personal experience and expertise to help them support and challenge the school to serve pupils well.
- Finances are effectively managed and monitored. Additional funds, such as pupil premium, primary sports premium and funding for special educational needs, are carefully checked by governors to ensure that they are spent to good effect.
- The governing body has good procedures to find out about the quality of teaching and

ensures that decisions about pay are related to whether staff have met their targets.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems are in place. Regular and up-to-date training ensures that all staff understand and follow the school's systems. Leaders have effectively established a culture and expectation, shared among all staff, that pupils' safety and well-being are given a high priority.
- The school grounds and building are not only attractive and well managed but kept secure. Online security is given appropriately high priority.
- Leaders, especially the headteacher and deputy headteacher, are persistent when any cases arise where there is a cause for concern. They liaise appropriately with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe and that their welfare and safety needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching and the use of assessment have improved throughout the school since the previous inspection.
- All staff form good relationships with their pupils. Behaviour is well managed throughout the school and a good atmosphere for learning exists. Pupils are encouraged and enjoy school and positive attitudes to learning are evident. Pupils are expected to work hard and concentrate during lessons. They are taught to take pride in their work and are expected to do their best.
- Pupils benefit from good-quality guidance to help them improve their work. This guidance includes helpful written and oral comments on their work and extensive guidance and checklists in classrooms, which clarify to pupils exactly what is expected.
- Well-trained teaching assistants are effectively deployed throughout the day. They provide particularly good additional support for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those at the early stages of learning English and those identified as being at risk of falling behind. All these groups make good progress throughout the school and the standards attained by all groups of disadvantaged pupils are rising.
- The school's effective approach for teaching phonics in younger classes has resulted in improving standards of reading and spelling in the early years and key stage 1
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has improved well and accounts for the better progress pupils are making throughout the school.
- The teaching of calculation, measures and number facts are the strongest aspects of mathematics teaching. Problem-solving, although mostly well taught, is not quite as strong.
- The teaching of reading is a particular strength throughout the school and pupils' improving reading skills are helping them learn in a wide range of subjects.

- The teaching of some aspects of writing, including spelling, grammar and punctuation, is very good. Pupils' extended writing is a weaker aspect and writing is less effectively taught in subjects other than English.
- Lessons are interesting and motivate pupils well so that they want to learn. Teachers question pupils carefully, give them time to discuss their answers and use their responses to deepen their understanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for learning. Support and guidance are often varied to meet the needs of all learners, including the most able. The school has recognised that, on occasions, even more could be expected of the most able and further guidance and challenge could be provided for them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Many parents told inspectors that they think the school looks after their children very well.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They also act with respect for the safety of others. They know how to look after themselves and can give many examples of how the school helps them to do so. These include keeping safe on the internet and how to safely use electronic devices. They learn about unsuitable websites and about computer viruses.
- Good relationships and manners are apparent throughout the school. Through visits and visitors and the daily teaching of staff, pupils learn that other people live in different ways and they learn to respect and tolerate other ways of life.
- Pupils are calm, responsive and respectful of one another and of their school. Staff are quick to identify and check any conduct that does not correspond to the school's normal positive atmosphere.
- Leaders ensure that all staff fully support the personal development of vulnerable pupils. The school's learning mentors and teaching assistants play a key part in this work. These vulnerable pupils are thus helped to participate fully in school life and engage with their lessons and this helps them to learn well.
- Pupils particularly enjoy and respond positively to current and historical role models that are well known to all pupils for the character traits that they have shown in their lives. For example, one pupil said, 'That was good because he wanted to do it and was brave enough to try it; just like Amy Johnson.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good around school, in the playground, in assembly and in classes. Pupils say that behaviour is always good at their school. They know that a lot is expected of the way that they conduct themselves.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff understand and implement the school's behaviour management policy consistently. Pupils are clear about what is expected and what to expect if they transgress.
- Good support systems have been established so that the effects of any disruptive

behaviour that occurs are dealt with so that the learning of others in the class is not interrupted.

- Pupils know who to turn to if they are worried about anything and they trust staff to 'sort out' any difficulties that arise. Pupils show good knowledge of the various forms that bullying can take and are proud to tell inspectors that there is very little bullying in their school and that, if any bullying does take place, it is quickly dealt with by staff.
- Rates of attendance have been considerably below national averages recently but attendance figures have picked up well this year due to improved procedures to ensure good attendance. Although rates of persistent absence have reduced this year, they are still too high and this slows the progress of a few pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, results in most national assessments have improved each year. Children's attainment at the end of Reception has steadily increased. Results in the national phonics screening in Year 1 have also improved well, due to the school's effective teaching of phonics in younger classes. Results in national assessments for Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have improved considerably.
- National assessment information indicates that in 2016 pupils made better progress than previously in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are making good progress and are on track to attain in line with expected standards. Standards are a little higher in reading and mathematics than in writing.
- The school's accurate records and the work in pupils' books show that the progress of current pupils is good throughout the school. Pupils are now being prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making much better progress throughout the school, due to better teaching and well-spent pupil premium funding.
- Throughout the school, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified. Staff understand and meet the needs of these pupils well so that they are effectively supported in their learning.
- Pupils who join the school with little or no written or spoken English are well supported to become confident learners. Because they make good progress in both written and spoken English, they are soon able to access and benefit from the school's full range of activities and learning.
- The most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress and more pupils are now beginning to attain above the standards expected of their ages. However, these pupils have the potential to do even better, especially in their writing, by being fully extended and sometimes challenged more.
- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, pupils mostly make good progress. The strongest progress is in physical education, music and modern foreign languages. The school recognises that there is more to be done in geography, design technology and science.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is well led and managed. Staff in the early years are an effective team and work consistently to the same ends. Staff are given frequent training and guidance to help them develop their expertise. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the progress of each individual child and work closely with early years staff to ensure that children's needs are met.
- Many children start the Nursery class with skills that are below those typical for their age. Effective arrangements to introduce children to school and good links with parents help them settle in quickly and children soon begin to make good progress. Parents appreciate the 'stay and play' sessions provided and say that they are happy to see how well their children adapt to school life.
- Attainment has steadily risen since the previous inspection and children now leave Reception well prepared for Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is very good in the early years. Early reading skills are taught well and good-quality teaching of phonics helps children make good progress in their early reading and spelling. The curriculum places appropriately strong emphasis on language acquisition, on children's personal development and on helping them to learn number and early mathematics.
- The use of assessment is also good. Staff continually undertake accurate assessments of each child's development. These assessments are then used well to match learning to individual needs. This means that all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Good use of pupil premium funding and good-quality teaching help disadvantaged children to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Leaders are aware and have accurately identified that, although the most able make good progress in the early years, there is a need to provide more highly challenging activities and opportunities for the most able to apply newly acquired basic skills. This applies particularly in the area of writing.
- Children develop positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school. They are keen to show their work to others and are proud of what they have done. They are expected to behave well and listen carefully when working independently or in whole-class activities.
- The curriculum is often interesting and exciting and provides children with many opportunities to develop their speaking skills, both in the indoor areas and outside. The early years classrooms and outdoor areas provide a very stimulating environment that makes a substantial contribution to children's learning.
- Support staff are very effective in moving children's learning forward through a range of good-quality activities. An example is the space station booking office and spaceship, where the staff member helps children to develop their writing skills by completing the booking forms and ship's log.
- Children are kept safe and secure at school and the quality of personal guidance and care is good. Safeguarding arrangements in the early years match the rigorous and effective arrangements apparent in the rest of the school. Children feel safe and are

happy and confident in their learning.

- Parents speak highly of the provision in the early years and they are effectively involved in their children's learning. The recent reorganisation of the early years, splitting the Nursery and Reception classes, has proved popular with parents, who report that the children settle well and that there is now more room.

School details

Unique reference number	122456
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10023088

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jim Fields
Headteacher	Eve Moran
Telephone number	0115 953 7200
Website	www.walterhallsprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@walterhalls.nottingham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much larger than most primary schools. Over half the pupils, a proportion that is well above average, are from minority ethnic backgrounds. An above-average proportion of pupils are from families whose first language is believed not to be English.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- 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

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, a number of shorter visits to see particular aspects of the school's work, such as the teaching of reading or group sessions for disadvantaged pupils, were carried out.
- A range of other school activities, including playtimes, lunchtimes, breakfast club and assembly, were observed.
- Inspectors scrutinised past and current work of pupils of different abilities in all year groups and listened to some pupils reading.
- A meeting was held with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Short discussions were held with 41 parents of 55 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. Too few parents responded to the online survey 'Parent View' to provide summary information. The 55 returns from a school survey conducted recently were analysed.
- Inspectors received the views of staff through discussions. They also received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- Inspectors analysed documents, including plans for school improvements and reports showing the school's view of its own performance and the local authority's view of the school. The school's records of pupils' attainment and progress were also analysed. The school's website was evaluated. Safeguarding documents, as well as policies and records relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour, welfare and safety and attendance, were inspected.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Anne White	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Amanda Stringer	Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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