

Castleford Townville Infants' School

Poplar Avenue, Townville, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 3QJ

Inspection dates

24-25 April 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not good in reading, writing and mathematics, in Years 1 and 2. This is because the quality of teaching is not consistently good in these classes.
- Governors did not act quickly enough to make the improvements required following the previous school inspection. Governance overall requires improvement, especially to hold teachers to account regarding pupil progress.
- Middle leaders are not sufficiently skilled to support more rapid school improvement.
- Pupils do not typically apply their phonics skills confidently to read or spell unfamiliar words.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough. In all classes, too few of the most able pupils achieve at the higher standards.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher is determined to improve the school. She has high ambitions for all pupils. She has correctly identified the most urgent priorities to make improvements and is taking effective action to realise higher pupil outcomes.
- Children in the early years make good progress because teaching here is good. Children enjoy school and are well prepared for Year 1.

- Teachers do not generally use the assessment information they have to challenge pupils in all classes appropriately to achieve more.
- The progress of some disadvantaged pupils is not as good as for the non-disadvantaged pupils, often because their attendance is poor.
- Over time, significant staffing issues have resulted in some pupils not making the progress they should at the end of Year 2.
- The deployment of teaching assistants is not as effective as it might be to help all pupils make the best progress they could.
- The behaviour of a few pupils lapses when teaching does not hold their attention fully.
- Pupils' understanding of the diverse cultures represented in Britain today is underdeveloped.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well throughout the school, because they are supported well.
- Pupils are kind and courteous to others. They feel safe and happy in school. The attendance of most pupils is good and they enjoy learning.
- Arrangements to support pupils' welfare are good.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders' monitoring of teachers' planning and its effectiveness ensures that all groups of pupils are challenged well and make the progress they should
 - teaching assistants are deployed to have maximum impact on pupils' learning throughout the school, especially among disadvantaged pupils and the most able
 - teaching staff are held to account for the progress pupils make in their classes
 - governors have the knowledge and skills they need to monitor the work of the school effectively and to hold leaders to account for the progress of all pupils
 - middle leaders have the training, skills and opportunities they need to improve provision in their areas of responsibility, particularly in teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better, in all classes, to help pupils make good progress from their various starting points by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure that learning activities are sufficiently challenging to match pupils' various needs
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve by moving them on to more challenging tasks more quickly, especially the most able and those on the borderline of achieving well
 - asking probing questions to deepen pupils' knowledge and to check that pupils understand their learning and know how to improve their work further
 - supporting less-confident learners and disadvantaged pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning more effectively in their reading, writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, check for careless punctuation, spelling and grammar errors and always try their best
 - making sure that pupils apply their phonics skills confidently and accurately when they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Improve the attendance among those disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school so that they can make progress in line with their classmates in the school.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to explore and understand the level of diversity represented in the school and in British society generally.

It is recommended that an external review of the school's governance is completed.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school has had a high level of staffing turbulence since the previous inspection, including at senior leader level. This, coupled with the school's slow response to recommendations in that inspection report, means the school has not moved forward sufficiently to be good at this time.
- Under the strong leadership of the new headteacher and the deputy, the school is finally starting to move forward, albeit slowly because some staffing issues still remain. However, the headteacher is determined to make improvements that will benefit pupils quickly and her actions are already showing impact. Under her uncompromising steer, pupils are making more secure progress and their attainment is rising strongly.
- The headteacher's plans to bring about improvement are clear and precise. All staff know her intent and understand their responsibilities to improve teaching and learning. Capacity to improve further is growing rapidly. However, most middle leaders are still new to their roles and have not had sufficient time or opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills to have greater impact on school improvement.
- Senior leaders' checks on teaching provide teachers with a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. The headteacher follows up on agreed actions to bring about improvement in the classroom. Through effective support and training for all staff, the quality of teaching is improving steadily, with staff understanding that nothing less than good is acceptable.
- Leaders gather useful information about pupils' achievement. However, not all staff use this information well enough to identify gaps in learning for different groups of pupils and plan more precisely for their needs in some classes. This is especially true for the most able pupils and the disadvantaged pupils.
- In the present absence of the leader for SEND pupils, the headteacher provides effective support for class teachers and oversees the range of interventions in place for pupils with SEND. In most cases, these pupils make good progress as a result.
- Leaders are making effective use of the pupil premium funding to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Many are making good progress now. However, some of these pupils, who also have special educational needs and/or disabilities, continue to underachieve. Their poor attendance and low aspirations hold them back considerably.
- By contrast, the school's sport premium funding is used well to increase pupils' participation in physical education (PE) and sport. Pupils enjoy PE and sport and eagerly anticipate visits from a variety of sports coaches and competitive events.
- Leaders ensure that there is adequate coverage of the full range of national curriculum subjects across the school. However, they do not ensure that in the teaching of other subjects, pupils apply their basic literacy and numeracy skills accurately at all times.
- The school's curriculum builds on pupils' interests and includes a range of opportunities to learn about the world beyond the school. The curriculum is enhanced by various clubs and regular educational visits to local places of interest. Recent visitors to school, like the 'owl man', engaged pupils in learning how to handle and care for animals.



- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well through assemblies, school trips and events. While pupils' cultural development is supported through learning about traditions in other countries, for example celebrations for the Chinese New Year, they have a less well-developed understanding of the diversity represented in the school. Nor do they have a full appreciation of British society or people with different faiths and backgrounds.
- Pupils learn about the values that they need to become responsible young citizens in modern Britain. For example, they learn about different family groups and to always respect others, and of how democracy works through selecting school councillors.
- Relationships with parents and carers are positive and improving strongly through regular opportunities for parents to attend social events and learning workshops. Parents appreciate the level of care afforded to their children and the opportunities that the school provides to help them develop their children's learning at home.

Governance of the school

- In the school's previous inspection in January 2017, the report recommended that governors undertook a review of their performance. This did not happen. This year, the local authority established a school improvement committee (SIC), that includes two current governors. This committee is supporting school leaders to action improvements and to increase the capacity of leadership of the school to move the school forward.
- This committee knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Members are frequent visitors to the school. They check that school improvements are having the impact they should. They review and challenge pupil performance data effectively. The headteacher provides clear reports regarding the school's performance. The committee members use this information and their direct knowledge of the school to ask appropriate, and often challenging, questions of the headteacher and other leaders.
- Leaders at all levels consider any external reports about the school's work carefully. They seek advice from the local authority and partner schools to evaluate their own school's performance and consider options to raise pupils' outcomes further.
- The committee is involved in development planning and monitors school finances closely. Leaders check the impact of additional funding, including the pupil premium and sport premium allocations. They know that these checks have not yet had sufficient impact of ensuring that disadvantaged pupils consistently achieve as well as their classmates. They are working systematically to make sure all pupils receive the support they need to achieve well in their academic and personal development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils are safe at school. The school's ethos and culture to keep pupils safe in school and beyond are high priority. Safeguarding arrangements meet all current statutory requirements. All staff and governors understand their duty of care responsibilities fully and exercise these diligently. Pupils know that school rules are there to minimise any potential risks and protect them. They learn about how to stay safe at school and home and of dangers posed by internet and social media sites if used without due care.



Staff and governors are all up to date with their safeguarding training and understand the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. All record-keeping is thorough. Staff know pupils and their families well and always place a sharp focus on child protection. If any concerns arise, school leaders contact other agencies promptly to safeguard pupils' well-being. Staff are particularly diligent in cases where vulnerable pupils and their families face challenging circumstances in their lives. They handle such situations sensitively and effectively. Parents value this vigilant care and support.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment, as in the last inspection, remains inconsistent. Although teaching is now improving, it is not strong enough to promote pupils' good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- Teachers do not typically set work that motivates and challenges all pupils fully in Years 1 and 2. Learning here is frequently pitched at a suitable level for the middleability pupils. Other pupils either find the work too difficult and so lose interest or waste time listening to teachers explain work that they have already mastered. When this happens, they begin to fidget and become restless and easily distracted. This often hinders the progress of the most able. Teaching assistants (TAs) generally support lower-ability pupils well, enabling them to make the progress expected of them, but the most able pupils do not receive such support routinely to achieve well.
- The teaching of mathematics, in key stage 1, is improving with more emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of number and their confidence in applying their mental mathematics strategies to solve calculations and problems. With the wide range of abilities in each class, learning is often more productive among the more confident pupils. When these pupils have to wait for others to catch up, some do not move on to harder work quickly enough to achieve as well as they could.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 has improved in the last year, with all teachers now developing pupils' phonics skills systematically. By the time pupils move into Year 2, most apply their phonics skills successfully in their reading. While this is having a positive impact on pupils' reading skills, those who in the past have not had such a secure grounding sometimes falter in their word building, spelling and comprehension skills when they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary. Hence, too few achieve at the higher standard in reading.
- Teachers have recently embraced a new approach to teaching writing. This is already proving successful in improving the standard of pupils' work. Pupils' English books show that most pupils are making stronger progress in this subject now than they have in the past. However, teachers' expectations of different groups of pupils are not always high enough in the quality of content and handwriting. For example, when spelling, grammar and punctuation errors go unchecked, pupils continue to make the same mistakes. This stops more pupils achieving at the higher standard in writing.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do in some other subjects are also not routinely high enough, for example in science and history. These subjects are not taught in sufficient depth to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills suitably well and apply their basic literacy and numeracy skills accurately in all subjects.



- Leaders are taking steps to improve pupils' handwriting and presentation skills. Some pupils write neatly, but others produce untidy work. In mathematics, careless setting out of work by some pupils sometimes leads to errors in their written calculations.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge to make learning interesting for pupils. This supports pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. Work schemes do help teachers structure pupils' learning step by step, but occasionally, in order to cover ground more quickly, staff fail to check that pupils understand their learning well enough to move on to new work. Consequently, gaps arise and so pupils' progress slows. This is more of an issue among disadvantaged pupils who miss school too often.
- Leaders have improved assessment systems across the school. They work with staff to ensure that their checks on pupils' learning are accurate. Leaders discuss pupils' progress with teachers regularly and plan additional support where needed. Support is provided in a timely way to enable most pupils to catch up.
- With the many staffing changes, both among teachers and TAs, not all pupils have had a smooth journey and so their progress does vary from class to class. Where teachers do not build on pupils' prior learning well enough by using the assessment information they now have, this hinders the progress of some pupils over time.
- Where pupils' learning is most rapid, teachers pose probing questions to explore and extend pupils' understanding. For example, in discussions about healthy eating, pupils in Year 2 were skilfully guided as to which foodstuffs make a healthy sandwich. Similarly, in Year 1, pupils were asked to classify animals by grouping them using any criteria they wished. Pupils soon realised that land-dwelling animals can also live in the water and swim and that it is not only birds that lay eggs because snakes do too. This enabled pupils to explore their scientific understanding and articulate their thinking. However, asking probing questions is not routine practice in all classes in key stage 1.
- Most teachers make effective use of TAs, to support pupils' learning. Deployment is often good when support staff work with individual pupils or small groups, particularly among the SEND pupils. Elsewhere, TAs have more variable impact on learning, especially where they have more general roles in the classroom.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know that adults will look after them and listen to them if they are upset. Most pupils enjoy learning and want to do their best.
- Pupils' mental and physical welfare has a high priority in the school. This is particularly evident in the level of care given to vulnerable pupils and their families. Staff are quick to act if they have any concerns regarding pupils' health and well-being. The school has strong links with outside support agencies. Staff encourage those pupils who find it difficult to learn because of difficult circumstances at home to talk about their feelings, often in small groups with highly skilled adults. This supports their social development along with their speaking and listening skills.
- Leaders instil in pupils an appreciation of nature and the beauty of the world around



them. Through a well-planned programme of lessons and activities, pupils learn to value the outdoors as a place of calm, peace and wonder. Pupils develop knowledge of environmental issues, including the importance of reducing plastic use and keeping the playground and classrooms tidy.

- Pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, professional bodies visit the school to teach pupils about road safety. Themed weeks help pupils learn about keeping safe on the internet. Pupils say that there is no bullying in school and know that it is wrong to hurt one another either physically or through name-calling. As one child explained, 'Calling people names is very unkind and it would make you sad or even make you cry a bit.'
- Through lessons and assemblies, pupils develop an appreciation of their local community. They learn to value differences and to develop tolerance towards others. Staff teach pupils about other religions, for example through visitors and lessons. Their understanding of diversity in the school and in British society generally is often less well developed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is improving although, overall, it is still below the national average. This is largely due to the poor attendance among some of the disadvantaged pupils who are absent too often. Leaders communicate their expectations for pupils' attendance well. They have been successful in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent, for example by rewarding good attendance in assemblies. Parents are encouraged to send their children to school regularly and most do.
- Most pupils typically behave well, but, where teaching is not well matched to their needs, pupils lose interest and become restive and inattentive, sometimes talking out of turn or distracting others. Some are slow to respond to teachers' instructions. This wastes time and disrupts the learning of other pupils in the class. The school has a clear behaviour policy, but this is not consistently applied by staff in every classroom.
- Generally, pupils understand what is expected of them and respond well to adults. Strong routines help to reinforce these expectations and create a secure environment in which pupils can flourish. Most pupils behave well in the classroom, around the school and in the playground, being mindful of others as they play. They play amiably and purposefully together and enjoy each other's company.
- Staff have considerable expertise in SEND provision and understand that some pupils need additional support for behavioural needs. Teachers plan provision carefully, for example to develop pupils' social skills such as turn-taking and listening. Pupils learn from staff how to accommodate pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 has continued to be below average since the previous inspection in reading, writing, mathematics and science. While attainment rose a little in 2017, it dipped again in 2018. In both these years, pupils' attainment was still below average in all these subjects. Too few pupils attained the higher standard in any



subject last year because pupils did not make the progress they should have against their performance at the end of early years.

- The headteacher has worked diligently with staff to improve teaching and learning as quickly as possible this year. Current work in pupils' books indicates that more pupils are now achieving the expected standards and are on track to make the progress they should in relation to their starting points. However, the numbers working at greater depth are still too low, largely because teachers' expectations are still not high enough.
- New strategies to teach mathematics are helping pupils to develop their understanding of number. Pupils are more secure in recognising which operation to apply when solving age-appropriate calculations and most work accurately. A number stated that they enjoyed mathematics and boasted mental agility in line with what is typical for their age. However, too few pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly among middle- and higher-ability pupils and the disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have taken steps to improve the teaching of writing and standards are rising. The changes made are very recent and still being developed by leaders and teachers. Pupils write with enjoyment and for a range of different purposes. Work in pupils' books shows that while most are working at the expected standards, too few are working at the higher standard. Teachers' expectations are not demanding enough of the most able pupils who are well capable of more. In some classes, too many errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation detract from the quality of work pupils produce. Pupils particularly do not apply their skills accurately or take time to check their work when working on their own, not just in English, but in their work in other subjects.
- Pupils are now achieving well in phonics. Leaders have focused on improving the teaching of phonics so that it is consistent across the school. As a result, pupils are becoming more confident in using their phonics skills, hence outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. Some pupils do still falter when facing unfamiliar vocabulary because they lack confidence to have a go, even if they have mastered their skills. Generally, most pupils read regularly, fluently and for pleasure. They value the opportunities to read with staff and enjoy a wide range of engaging fiction and non-fiction texts.
- The school is aware that some disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their classmates. Some of these pupils do make strong progress, but low outcomes are still an issue among those who have additional individual needs or miss too much school. Leaders are putting further provision in place to address this shortfall as quickly as possible. The differences between their attainment and that of their peers are reducing as overall teaching improves.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well to practise their skills in phonics, mathematics and reading. They make good progress towards their individual targets as a result.

Early years provision

Good

- The headteacher is currently the early years leader. On joining the school, she quickly identified areas for improvement and made effective changes to the curriculum and teaching. Children make good progress and are prepared well for Year 1.
- Staff in the early years plan activities based on accurate assessments of children's



abilities, needs and interests. Children's attainment has risen since the previous inspection and an improving trend has been established. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development was in line with the national average in 2018. This represents good progress from often below typical starting points for many.

- Staff use questioning effectively to extend children's thinking and develop their use of language. Children absorb new vocabulary with delight, repeating words and phrases staff introduce in their play as 'construction workers' or 'ticket officers' in their make-believe train station, saying for example, 'Five pounds please if you want go to town.' Staff encourage children to develop their answers by asking open-ended questions such as 'How shall we do this? Can we make the red pink? Will the mud dry if we put it in the sun? Why do we need sun-cream when it is hot? Why do we learn phonics?'
- Developing children's personal, social, emotional and communication skills has high priority. Most children settle in school quickly and, as some parents stated, 'My child loves it here and I am so pleased he is so happy. I think I miss him more than he misses me.'
- Staff ensure that the curriculum allows children to become skilled in all areas. Knowing that boys often prefer outdoor play and construction toys when given the choice, staff skilfully steer them to reading, writing and number activities by making these fun and enticing and sometimes competitive. For example, all children searched furiously to find the missing letters in the sand and sound these out accurately. Occasionally, the most able children could be challenged to move to harder tasks more quickly.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and children enjoy reading and writing tasks. They try hard in their learning, with only occasional lapses when they struggle to keep on task because they lose concentration or are distracted by others. Nursery children are quick to learn from Reception-age children because they want to be as good as them.
- Staff use indoor and outdoor spaces effectively, giving children the opportunity to try new things, invent and ask questions and manage their own learning. They ensure that children explore, investigate, debate and discuss and intervene appropriately to check their learning. Children with specific needs are identified early and staff tailor plans to meet their needs and include them in everything all other children do.
- All staff ensure that children's safety and welfare are high priority. Children are safe and know how to stay safe. All safeguarding procedures are followed diligently, including daily checks to make sure toys, equipment and the environment are intact.
- Staff encourage parents to contribute and share information about children's learning. Regular workshops and opportunities to work with their children in school encourage parents to support their children at home. Relationships between home and school are nurtured sensitively and effectively to benefit children in the best ways possible.



School details

Unique reference number	108229
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10087520

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	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Latham
Headteacher	Caroline Burden
Telephone number	01977 554 185
Website	www.townville.wakefield.sch.uk/
Email address	headteacher@townville.wakefield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Children attend part-time in the Nursery class and full-time in the Reception classes.
- The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average.
- The school has experienced high staff turbulence since its previous inspection.
- The local authority appointed an interim headteacher from September 2017. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in April 2018, followed by the current headteacher who took up post in September 2018.
- In September 2018, the local authority established the school improvement committee to oversee the performance of the school and cover the role of the governing body.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, with senior leaders joining them on several occasions. They also looked at pupils' work in their workbooks, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress with senior leaders.
- In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the school improvement committee and a member of the governing body who is also on the same committee. Inspectors had discussions with various staff in the school, including the leader responsible for managing the support for pupils with SEND, the leader for the early years and the leaders for English, mathematics and science. There was also a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the leaders' reviews of the school's performance and records of monitoring visits by other providers. They also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the 22 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and talked informally with a number of parents during the inspection. They also took into consideration the 22 comments submitted to Ofsted by parents. Inspectors also took into consideration the 10 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. No pupils submitted any responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector Ofsted Inspector



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