

# Carcroft Primary School

Owston Road, Carcroft, Doncaster DN6 8DR

## Inspection dates

8–9 June 2016

## 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                        | Outstanding          |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching and learning are inconsistent and variable in Years 5 and 6. The progress made by pupils in these year groups has not been good enough and their attainment is low.
- A small number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not motivated to learn. The lack of challenge in some lessons contributes to this and to some low-level disruptive behaviour.
- The gap between standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils and all pupils nationally is too wide and not reducing quickly enough.
- Pupils' mathematical problem-solving and investigation skills are not developed well enough.
- School leaders have not eliminated weaker teaching, in part because of staffing difficulties.
- Leaders in key posts have not had enough time to work with other teachers to embed initiatives to improve standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures is not developed well enough because of weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge of religious education and world faiths.
- Pupils' attendance remains below the national average.
- Pupils are not well prepared for the increased demands of secondary school.

### The school has the following strengths

- School leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They work closely together to bring about improvements.
- The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 4 has improved since the last inspection. Pupils in these year groups make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provision for children in the early years is outstanding. Their progress is rapid because their teachers plan activities that match their needs, so that they develop a wide range of skills.
- Most pupils are keen to learn and willing to work hard. Their behaviour is good. They show respect for each other and adults.
- Pupils are kept safe. Adults ensure that there is a safe environment and pupils understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Most pupils benefit from a well-planned, interesting curriculum.
- Adults emphasise shared values such as respect, tolerance and effort.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - providing time for senior, middle and subject leaders to work with other teachers to have an impact on the improvement of pupils' outcomes
  - ensuring that pupil premium spending is having a greater impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils towards ambitious targets which reflect their capabilities
  - providing training to address teachers' weak subject knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching religious education.
- Improve the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, especially in Years 5 and 6, so that it enables all pupils to reach their full potential in all subjects by:
  - planning interesting activities that take full account of what pupils already know so that pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning do not wane in lessons and behaviour improves
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills by carrying out investigations
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave, so ensuring that pupils in Year 6 are better prepared for their transition to secondary school.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are not attending school regularly.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. Over time, current pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made well below the expected rates of progress, resulting in attainment that falls short of their potential. Staffing changes and some weaker teaching that fails to motivate pupils have contributed to this situation.
- Leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils make the rapid progress of which they are capable. Although the achievement gap between these pupils and others is narrowing as a result of the school's actions, it is still too wide and not closing quickly enough.
- Teachers have not received the training they need to equip them for specific subject teaching, particularly religious education but also aspects of mathematics.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate and frank. The evaluation has correctly taken account of the progress pupils make over time and the standards they attain at the end of the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. While progress is rapid in most year groups, leaders and managers recognise that pupils' progress towards the end of key stage 2 has been too slow.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders have raised the ambition of pupils and staff and the school. Their planning for school improvement is well focused. The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment has been successful in raising standards in the early years and the lower years of the school. Feedback and coaching provided by leaders have enabled teachers to successfully develop their practice because they know exactly what to do to enhance their teaching and pupils' learning.
- Middle leaders, including those newly appointed for special educational needs or disability and for mathematics, have added significantly to the leadership capacity in the school. Although these leaders have a precise knowledge of strengths and areas to improve, they have not had the time to work with other teachers to act upon this information.
- The school now has systems and procedures for assessment that are clear and robust. These enable senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers to track the attainment and progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils effectively.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities which are very popular and widely attended. These help pupils to extend their skills and add to their enjoyment of school.
- Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is promoted well through the curriculum and a wide range of visits and visitors. Their cultural development is limited because they have few opportunities to gain an understanding and awareness of the diversity of Britain's multi-faith and multicultural society. The British values of respect, tolerance and rule of law are taught well.
- The physical education and sports premium funding has been used effectively to increase participation rates in sporting activities and increase teachers' skills. Pupils enjoy a wider range of sporting activities than in the past and participate in more competitive events. Teachers' skills have also improved as a result of the expert coaching.
- The school has employed a pastoral manager to develop links with pupils and their families and especially to support their behavioural, social and emotional needs. Pupils and parents speak highly of the support they receive. The actions taken since the last inspection have increased pupils' attendance and punctuality, although absence remains above average.
- The local authority has acted promptly to support the school in challenging underachievement, weak teaching and pupils' behavioural difficulties and has contributed to the school's recent improvements. Although the many staff changes have hindered the pace of change, there have been important improvements in most year groups and further developments are planned to be implemented in September 2016.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors, many of whom have been appointed since the previous inspection, bring a good range of experience and skills to support and challenge the school, as shown by the searching questions they have been asking about pupils' progress.
  - Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching throughout the school and the impact it has on pupils' progress. Not only do they make effective use of the detailed information they receive

from the headteacher and others, they find things out for themselves through frequent visits.

- Governors keep a close eye on the budget. They know that the school has not been fully successful in ensuring that pupil premium funding has resulted in improved achievement for disadvantaged pupils. Governors agree that a pupil premium review should be initiated as a matter of some urgency. They have checked that the sports premium is used effectively.
- They have attended relevant training and ensured that their statutory duties are met. For example, governors consider recommendations for teachers' pay progression carefully, ensuring that rewards are given only where merited by good performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have established productive partnerships with parents and external agencies that ensure that all pupils are supported and feel safe. Staff have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training. Effective systems and good relationships promote a safe culture in school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been inconsistent since the last inspection, with pupils in Years 5 and 6 making slow progress as a consequence. Staffing issues, including many changes of staff, and weaknesses in the quality of teaching, have adversely affected progress for these two year groups.
- Where teaching is less effective, planning does not take account of the differing prior attainment of pupils, so they all are given the same task regardless of their starting point. In some classes in Years 5 and 6, teachers have not acted upon the good practice that has been modelled for them. As a result, the most able pupils in particular have not been sufficiently challenged and pupils have not made sufficiently rapid progress.
- In Years 5 and 6, pupils' attitudes to learning are variable and dependent on the quality of teaching. When pupils are challenged and inspired they become totally engrossed in their learning. However, on other occasions, they switch off, lose interest and disturb other children because teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are not high enough.
- Although the teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection, pupils have too few opportunities to complete mathematical investigations.
- Teaching is good in early years, key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. In these classes, teachers plan to meet the needs of all groups of pupils effectively. The most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability are challenged to make at least good progress from their starting points. Clear success criteria are used well to allow pupils to understand fully what is expected of them. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on what they have studied to reinforce learning. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply when tackling activities or responding to questions.
- Most teachers have secure subject knowledge of English and mathematics. They use questions and resources well to make sure that pupils make faster progress. Teaching assistants also make a valuable contribution to the improved quality of learning in the school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are mostly positive. Praise is used well by teachers to encourage pupils to make good progress and most pupils are interested and engaged in their learning.
- In most classes, pupils' writing skills have been developed well since the previous inspection. Pupils have been given opportunities to write at length and there has been a successful focus on improving spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils are encouraged to read a range of texts to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills and many read for pleasure. As a consequence of the good teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent), weaker readers are able to sound out words and so develop their confidence in reading.
- Most pupils value the homework that they are given. Teachers set appropriate tasks which deepen pupils' understanding by giving them opportunities to consolidate their learning.
- As a result of the actions taken by school leaders, the quality of marking has improved during this school year. Almost all staff consistently follow the school's marking policy. They check that pupils respond to feedback and use the targets that they set to inform subsequent activities. This has contributed to pupils' improved progress, particularly in Years 1 to 4.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Across the school, most pupils make every effort to improve their learning. However, a small proportion of pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are not resilient and do not persevere with their work to do as well as they can.
- The school works hard to develop pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness through the curriculum and after-school clubs. The encouraging atmosphere in the school means that most pupils are confident to take risks, recognising that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Sports funding is providing them with a wide range, and enjoyment of, physical activities.
- Older pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility such as anti-bullying ambassadors, school councillors and playground leaders. They talk to younger pupils and help them play games sensibly at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- The breakfast club is well attended and provides a good start to the day. Pupils are generally very happy to attend Carcroft Primary School and summed up their feelings when one pupil added, 'it's a safe place, full of happiness and we act as a team.'

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- There has been an above-average number of short-term exclusions since the start of the academic year. This is because, despite extensive additional support and the use of a full range of sanctions, a small number of pupils have not been able to manage their own behaviour well enough.
- There is a very small number of pupils whose behaviour continues to be extremely challenging. This is despite the efforts of the school, which include obtaining the support of behaviour specialists and an educational psychologist to develop programmes to help these pupils to learn how best to manage their emotions. Additionally, the school's procedures for recording and analysing incidents of inappropriate behaviour and bullying have been tightened since the beginning of the current academic year. These actions have not been entirely successful. A number of pupils have moved to alternative provision, while others continue to reoffend in school.
- The vast majority of pupils conduct themselves well in and around school. They are polite, courteous and respectful to visitors. They have an admirable sense of loyalty to their school and say clearly that the disruptive behaviour of a few pupils does not have a significant impact on their learning. The majority of parents say that behaviour is good, but a few recognise that there are some issues caused by a few pupils.
- The vast majority of pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they feel safe at the school. Pupils indicated that there has been a small amount of bullying and that on rare occasions, pupils behave very badly. However, pupils were keen to highlight that staff have dealt with these situations very well, providing pupils with a strong sense of security. Pupils explained carefully to inspectors how to stay safe online by not talking to strangers and by not divulging any personal information such as their names, ages and addresses.
- Pupils attend school more often this year than they did at the time of the previous inspection, but rates of attendance are still below average and persistent absence is above average.

## Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because too many pupils in the current Year 5 and Year 6 cohorts have made inadequate progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics. In writing, for example, their presentation of work is poor, their sentence construction is underdeveloped and their vocabulary choices are lacking in imagination. This represents a significant decline in pupils' performance as the Year 6 cohort in 2015 made good progress in reading, mathematics and particularly in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making sufficiently rapid progress to catch up with their peers. In key stage 1 in 2015, disadvantaged pupils were over two terms behind other pupils nationally. In key stage 2, these

pupils were two terms behind in mathematics and writing and over four terms behind in reading.

- The progress of the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 has also been too slow.
- In Years 1 to 4, pupils are making more rapid progress and standards are higher. The proportion of pupils who achieved the required standard in the Year 1 check on phonics improved dramatically in 2014, and that improvement was sustained in 2015, although outcomes were very slightly below the national average.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 was broadly average in reading and mathematics and a little below average in writing. This represents good progress from low starting points. Overall, standards have risen consistently over the past three years in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The work of pupils currently in Year 2 and assessment information indicate a continuing pattern of improvement. Most Year 2 pupils are well prepared for key stage 2, although the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others remains too wide.
- In Years 1 to 4, pupils' attainment has risen rapidly due to improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. Current assessment information and work in pupils' books show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects, with the exception of religious education. The most able pupils in these year groups make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make progress from their starting points at the same rate as their classmates in all year groups. In most classes they benefit from accurate assessment of their learning needs and well-organised, well-tailored support from teachers and teaching assistants.

## Early years provision

## is outstanding

- The early years provision has developed rapidly under the guidance of the early years leader. Provision is very effective in both the Nursery and Reception classes. This is because children, including disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs or disability, get the support they need from the moment they join the setting. Consequently, children make great strides in their learning, behave very well and develop positive relationships with adults and their peers. They leave very well prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- Children are given every opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge. Staff know the children very well. Their accurate assessments enable them to plan challenges which build on what children already know, so that no time is wasted.
- Close liaison with pre-school providers and visits to parents provide teachers and teaching assistants with as much information as possible before children start at the school. Staff use this information very well to ensure a smooth transition to school, as well as to check that the school's baseline assessments are accurate. They make sure that the right approaches are put in place to meet each child's needs.
- The early years leader has developed the outside area very effectively so that it now enhances children's learning. Teachers and teaching assistants direct and guide children so that they get the most from the equipment, which includes a 'mud kitchen', a construction area, a nature garden and areas which children make good use of for reading and mark making.
- Teachers plan phonics and numeracy sessions very well and pose probing questions to help children learn. Consequently, children make good progress in these areas of learning from starting points that are much lower than those that are typically expected. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion reaching a good level of development was broadly in line with the national average.
- All staff are skilled at developing children's vocabulary and speech. They ask searching questions that enable children to gain new knowledge and skills. For example, children were creating a meal for the Queen in the mud kitchen and were asked to consider whether different types of food are healthy or unhealthy. The question prompted the children to think hard and they decided that salad would be a tasty and healthy accompaniment to have with the delicious mud meal.
- The topics covered engage and motivate children and are carefully chosen to appeal to boys as well as girls. Topics such as 'traditional stories' are skilfully developed to provide opportunities for children to develop their literacy and mathematical skills through, for example, role play, story writing and word problems, such as solving how Hansel and Gretel could share 12 sweets.
- Staff ensure that all areas of learning receive full consideration and make the most of current events. For example, during the inspection, children were writing 90th birthday cards for the Queen.

- Specialist teaching by experts helps to develop children's physical skills, including balance and ball skills. This approach dovetails with that found in key stages 1 and 2 and therefore helps children make a good start in Year 1.
- The environment is safe and conducive to children discovering through play. Children move between activities within the setting in a very orderly and calm manner. There are rigorous procedures to ensure that children are protected and that any issues are identified and monitored by the early years leader.

## School details

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 106757    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Doncaster |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 10009182  |

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

|                                            |                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                                          |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                                                                        |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                                                                                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                                            |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 333                                                                                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                                                               |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Emma Foster                                                                                      |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Ruth Willis                                                                                      |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01302 722353                                                                                     |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.carcroftprimary.co.uk">www.carcroftprimary.co.uk</a>                         |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:headteacher@carcroft.doncaster.sch.uk">headteacher@carcroft.doncaster.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 29–30 January 2014                                                                               |

## Information about this school

- Carcroft Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Since the previous inspection, the school leadership has changed significantly. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2014, the deputy headteacher in September 2015 and a number of other leaders have taken up their roles within the last six months. There has been significant staff turnover.
- A number of new governors have been appointed since the previous inspection and two existing governors have been appointed as chair and vice-chair.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is well below average.
- Children in early years attend on a part-time basis in the Nursery, either in the morning or afternoon. Children in the two Reception classes attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils eligible to be supported by the pupil premium is much higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- In 2015, the school met 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.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited each class at least once and observed learning in lessons. Shorter visits were made to observe phonics sessions and pupils' behaviour and to see the provision made for pupils who have special educational needs or disability. Pupils were also observed in assembly, at breaktimes and around the school.
- The inspection team met formally with a group of pupils, and spoke to many others informally. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 were heard to read.
- Inspectors examined a variety of documentation, particularly relating to the school's own evaluations, pupils' progress and how the school keeps children safe, including the safety checks made on staff.
- The team held meetings with senior leaders, a group of subject leaders, a group of other staff and members of the governing body. An inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start and end of the day. The team took note of 14 replies to the online survey, Parent View, and studied the five written comments that parents made online.
- There were no responses from a survey of staff opinion and no responses from the pupil questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Steve Bywater, lead inspector  
Beverley Riddle  
Peter Heaton

Ofsted Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector

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