

Victoria Primary School

Ainsworth Drive, The Meadows, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG2 1FX

Inspection dates

25 to 26 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since joining the school, the headteacher, supported by senior leaders and the Nova Education Trust, has transformed the quality of the school's work. He has an unswerving commitment to improve the school further.
- Leaders have strong expertise in their areas of responsibility. They provide staff with regular, high-quality professional development. This has been crucial in securing good teaching throughout the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They visit the school frequently to check for themselves how well pupils are learning.
- Parents and carers are positive about all aspects of the school. They recognise the recent improvements and praise the quality of teaching and care their children receive.
- Children make a good start in the early years. Staff are knowledgeable and ambitious for children to achieve well. Children make strong progress whatever their starting points.
- Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are also making good progress. However, progress is weaker in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils, boys in particular, make errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar which detract from the overall quality of their written work.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils successfully develop knowledge, skills and interest in a broad range of subjects. Teaching in science and design technology, however, does not consistently offer sufficient challenge for all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported and make good progress.
- Pupils' emotional well-being is cared for very effectively by the school's pastoral team.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, both through the curriculum and through the example set by adults.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They embody the school's aim that pupils will 'work hard and be kind'. Pupils of all backgrounds learn and play together harmoniously.
- Pupils behave well. They are friendly and kind to one another. They feel safe, are proud of their school and their behaviour reflects this.
- Rates of absence and persistent absence are above the national averages.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the curriculum and teaching in science and design technology so that there is sufficient challenge for all pupils and pupils have stronger recall of what they have been taught.
- Improve pupils' progress in writing, particularly that of boys.
- Reduce the levels of absence and persistent absence so they are at least in line with the national averages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher took up his post in January 2017. The school had recently joined the Nova Education Trust. The overall effectiveness of the predecessor school had been inadequate. Prior to his appointment, the school had had six different interim headteachers over a period of three years.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the trust, has provided inspirational leadership. All of the staff who shared their views with Ofsted, strongly agreed that the quality of education at Victoria has improved.
- Leaders at every level are held rigorously to account. All leaders set a clear vision for their area of responsibility. They produce detailed plans which outline how they will achieve their goals. Trust and senior leaders implement strong performance management procedures to check how effectively these plans are enacted. This high expectation ensures that the additional funding, such as the pupil premium and the primary sports and PE funding, is used scrupulously to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Through regular visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and analysis of assessment information, leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning. Staff value highly the coaching, mentoring and training they receive to help them become increasingly more effective.
- Leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very strong. The leader ensures that any additional help provided for pupils is supported by research to confirm its effectiveness. All staff who teach pupils with SEND receive training to ensure they implement the support programmes correctly. The progress of pupils with SEND is evaluated thoroughly. This ensures that teaching helps pupils overcome any barriers to learning which put them at risk of underachieving.
- Staff morale is high. Staff are proud to work at the school and recognise the significant improvements which have occurred since it opened. They are overwhelmingly positive about the way leaders consider their well-being when they make decisions about teaching and assessment policies.
- Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors, and those who wrote to Ofsted, have very positive views of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's values support strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. British values are highlighted throughout the curriculum, in assemblies and through educational visits. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of one another's differences. They have a good awareness of the diversity of faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

Governance of the school

- The trust is ambitious in its pursuit of the highest possible standards of teaching, learning and behaviour. Through effective support and challenge, it has helped the headteacher and senior leaders to bring about the substantial improvements seen since

the school opened. The trust is determined that these gains will be sustained and built on.

- The local governing body has a good understanding of the school, its challenges and the factors which have led to rapid improvements.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and experience. They draw their information about the school from a range of sources, including visits to the school to learn more about the school's work and performance.
- Minutes of the meetings of the local governing body show governance is well organised. Governors ask probing questions and ensure that agreed actions from previous meetings have been addressed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that the school has a culture where staff know safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff have regular and appropriate training to understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. They are vigilant in looking out for indicators of risk or harm.
- Leaders have established a safeguarding team with the skills and experience to both protect and support children. Key members of this team know the local community well and have built up excellent relationships with a range of children and family services. This enables them to secure prompt support for children and families if issues arise which may threaten the well-being of pupils.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. The curriculum provides them with important information about keeping safe and healthy. For example, sessions on online safety ensure that pupils are fully aware of the dangers of sharing personal information when using computers or mobile telephones.
- Pupils have a number of ways to seek support if they are anxious or sad. Crucially, they trust the adults in the school. Pupils know the school staff will do all they can to ensure they are safe, both inside and outside school.
- The safeguarding team is diligent in maintaining appropriate, confidential records relating to any safeguarding concerns. When appropriate, the team shares information with external agencies and is persistent in following up concerns as necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is increasingly effective across the school. High-quality professional development, particularly in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics, means that teachers have strong subject knowledge in these key subjects and a clear understanding of the standards their pupils should be reaching.
- There has been a successful drive to encourage pupils to read more regularly. Classes now have high-quality fiction read to them and an improved range of books to choose from for their personal reading. The teaching of reading is more effective than in the past, as a result of a focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and providing training for

staff to ensure phonics and comprehension skills are well taught.

- Pupils' workbooks show a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics, including the teaching of number recall, reasoning and problem-solving. Teachers set questions and activities to make pupils, regardless of their ability, think hard. In mathematics lessons, teachers are skilled in picking up pupils' misconceptions and use these to improve pupils' learning.
- The approach to teaching writing takes into account that many pupils, including those who speak English as their first language, have narrow vocabularies and quite limited cultural experiences. Consequently, teachers take care to give pupils plenty of information about the topic they are going to write about and introduce them to words relevant to the planned writing activity. They teach this knowledge and vocabulary thoroughly so pupils are well prepared to undertake independent pieces of writing.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. They receive good-quality teaching and support from teachers and skilled teaching assistants. When required, staff are quick to break learning down into manageable steps so pupils understand what they are doing. Pupils who have a specific difficulty are provided with additional teaching to help them to overcome their weakness.
- Teachers and teaching assistants meet very effectively the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Languages spoken by members of staff, include Polish, Hungarian, Urdu, Punjabi, Spanish and French. Staff promptly assess the stage in learning English when pupils start school and tailor language development accordingly. They are assisted by 10 'Language Ambassadors'. These are pupils who have completed the accredited 'Young Translators' training and support other pupils, their families and staff.
- The best teaching remains sharp in the pupils' memories. For example, pupils recall books which have made them feel sad and educational visits which have deepened their understanding of values, such as tolerance and the rule of law. However, this is not consistently the case. Some pupils could not recall key facts about the science topics they had covered over the school year.
- Pupils' work shows that in some subjects, such as science and design technology, all pupils usually complete the same task. These tasks can lack challenge for the most able pupils.
- Pupils clearly enjoy their learning and there are very strong relationships evident in all classrooms. Additional adults are deployed well to support pupils with their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The attention leaders give to pupils' personal development is reflected in the approach they take to transition, when pupils leave to go to their secondary schools. The headteacher visits the Year 7 pupils in their secondary schools and asks them their views on how well they were prepared for their new schools. The very honest answer from pupils led to important changes to the school's transition work this year.

- Leaders take similar care over the effectiveness of the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. The curriculum takes full account of nationally recommended best practice on issues such as children's mental health and draws on personal development programmes, including Prevent Primary and Stonewall Primary. Crucially, the curriculum is updated annually to ensure that it is tailored to reflect the challenges faced by pupils living in the local area, including knife crime.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. It includes high-quality guidance on online safety, life skills and healthy lifestyles. Through the school council and roles, such as 'Language Ambassadors', pupils can take on positions of responsibility and help others.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say adults listen to them and take their concerns seriously. Pupils are confident that there is a trusted adult they can speak with if they are upset. Pupils say that any issues they raise are dealt with promptly.
- Vulnerable pupils receive additional high-quality care to support their emotional well-being. This support includes specialist support from a counsellor, a highly effective family support worker and a trauma and attachment assistant. Their expertise helps pupils manage times when they feel anxious or angry. It has contributed well to the reduction in exclusions and instances of poor behaviour.
- Pupils understand what bullying means. There have been no bullying incidents this school year.
- Pupils show respect for each other. They cooperate well together to share ideas for activities. Pupils have a good understanding of cultures and beliefs other than their own.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good
- When the school opened in 2016, behaviour was poor. During the first year, ill-discipline disrupted learning and rates of exclusions were high for a primary school. Leaders and teachers have very successfully addressed this issue.
- In class and around the school, pupils behave sensibly. They are polite, respectful and kind to others. Pupils show good concentration in lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers. They work conscientiously, both when set individual tasks and when working with others.
- Pupils are very welcoming to visitors. They talk with enthusiasm about their love for their school community and the things they have enjoyed learning.
- The rates of absence and persistent absence are above the national averages for primary schools. Leaders have had some success this year in securing better attendance, but there remains work to be done to ensure all families understand the negative impact missing school has on their children's learning and development.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since Victoria opened, two groups of pupils have left the school at the end of Year 6. The attainment of these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. However, pupils' mobility is much higher than the national average. This has a negative impact on the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching have led to a strong improvement in pupils' progress and attainment. For example, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 more than doubled from 2017 to 2018.
- Across the school, more pupils are now gaining the knowledge and skills expected for their age. Pupils who have attended Victoria since it opened are making good progress. Pupils in this group, who are currently in Years 2 and 6, are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teaching is now successfully meeting the needs of the most able pupils. Leaders check closely that work set for these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently challenging. In the current Year 6, the proportions of pupils working above the age-related expectations are much higher than in the previous two years.
- Improving pupils' reading skills is a priority in key stage 1. Most pupils use their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. However, in Year 1, over two-fifths of pupils joined the school this academic year. Many of them speak English as an additional language or are new to English. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is well below the national average.
- Teaching throughout the school is enabling pupils to read with greater understanding. Pupils infer meaning and nuance from what they read with increasing confidence, and they are predicting with greater perception what may happen next when reading fiction.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They have a good knowledge of number bonds and multiplication facts and so are confident when working on mental arithmetic problems. A new approach to teaching mathematics is strengthening pupils' ability to apply their reasoning skills when solving problems.
- Pupils' progress is weaker in writing than in reading and mathematics. Pupils write regularly across the curriculum and teachers' expectations are high. However, pupils, boys in particular, sometimes struggle to apply accurately what they have learned in spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons to more extended pieces of writing or in subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. Class teachers ensure that this group of pupils follow the same curriculum as their peers, albeit adapted to take into account their specific needs. Additional support is carefully planned and its impact regularly checked.
- Specialist provision for a group of pupils with significant additional needs meets their individual needs very effectively. The use of Makaton throughout the day and a rich range of carefully chosen resources ensure that pupils make good progress towards

their individual targets.

- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The school successfully ensures that disadvantaged pupils achieve just as well as other pupils.
- Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their work across the curriculum. However, their recall of what they learned in some subjects, for example in science, is quite weak.

Early years provision

Good

- The great majority of children enter the early years with starting points well below those typical for their age. Many speak little or no English. From these starting points, children make good progress, especially in communication, language and literacy.
- The early years leader is very effective. She is knowledgeable about teaching and learning in the early years and has high ambition for every child. She ensures that staff make accurate assessments of children's progress across all of the areas of learning. Additional support is promptly put in place if a child is at risk of falling behind.
- Teaching is strong in the early years. Both indoors and outdoors, children encounter a wide range of learning experiences and happily work and play with others. Staff ensure that developing speaking and listening skills is at the heart of most of these activities. During the inspection, children chatted happily together as they made decisions about the junk models they were building.
- There is particularly strong support for children who join the early years at the earliest stage of learning English. Staff are skilled in assessing their needs and providing a curriculum tailored to meet these needs. The children settle quickly and gain in confidence because of the encouragement they have to speak and take part in activities.
- Staff use funding effectively in order to support the needs of disadvantaged children. They recognise the main barrier to learning for many disadvantaged children relates to language development. Specialist teaching, often one to one, is provided for these children to support their language development.
- Children in the early years are very happy and safe. Safeguarding is effective and remains a high priority for staff at all times. Children quickly learn the expectations about behaviour and follow classroom routines closely. They work cooperatively with each other and have a clear awareness of their safety and the safety of others.
- When children start school their listening and attention skills are weak. Staff develop these skills very effectively. Nursery children showed good levels of concentration during a number lesson. They listened carefully to the teacher and successfully sorted objects to develop an understanding of 'more' and 'less'. Similarly, Reception children followed teaching closely during their phonics lesson. Most of the children use their phonics skills to write sentences.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors commented positively about how happy their children are in the early years. They say staff are approachable and reassuring if they have any concerns. However, attendance is lower in the early years than in other key stages.

- Reception children are well prepared for Year 1, given their low starting points. However, the current system of checking how well children are learning in the Nursery class does not identify precisely enough the small steps in learning children are gaining. This limits the ability of staff to be clear about the impact of teaching and to plan activities which will strengthen the children's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	145018
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10087313

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	401
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Mills
Headteacher	Russell Gray
Telephone number	0115 807 7750
Website	www.victoriaprimarieschool.org.uk
Email address	office@victoriaprimarieschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Victoria Primary opened in September 2016. Its predecessor school had been placed in special measures.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is sponsored by the Nova Education Trust. The trust delegates some of its responsibilities to the local governing body through its scheme of delegation.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average. There are 33 languages spoken at the school.
- The rate of pupils' mobility is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is close to the national average for primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, staff, parents and a representative from the Nova Education Trust.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and throughout the day. They attended an assembly.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and spoke with pupils at meetings and informally.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including school improvement plans, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information about the attainment and progress of pupils, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the 12 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 10 free-text responses from parents.
- Inspectors also considered the 33 responses from staff to their questionnaire.

Inspection team

Anthony O'Malley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca King	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Watkins	Her Majesty's Inspector

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