

Lowe's Wong Anglican Methodist Junior School

Queen Street, Southwell NG25 0AA

Inspection dates 27–28 January 2016

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and other leaders are ambitious for the school and determined to drive further improvement. Leaders set the ethos for the school and ensure that it is an environment where pupils can thrive and are extremely well prepared for their next stage in education.
- Teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Pupils receive feedback that helps them deepen their learning and make good progress. The curriculum themes are well planned to provide learning opportunities that interest and inspire the pupils.
- Standards in the school are high, particularly in reading and writing, and progress has improved since the last inspection.
- Personal development and welfare is outstanding. The school cares for its pupils exceptionally well and makes sure they are safe and well looked after. Behaviour is good throughout the school; pupils clearly enjoy their learning and work well with others.
- School leaders provide rich opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being; as a result, pupils take an interest in the wider world beyond the school.
- Governors know the school well and provide strong support and challenge to school leaders in securing further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing.
- Some pupils do not take as much care with their work and it is not always well presented.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve progress in mathematics so that pupils reach the same high standards as in reading and writing by:
 - continuing the training for teachers to ensure that all mathematics teaching is consistently good and better
 - ensuring that all pupils are able to develop skills in reasoning so that they can apply their knowledge and understanding to solving problems
 - ensuring that pupils develop the skills that enable them to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - making good use of the detailed assessment information the school collects to make sure pupils do not fall behind
 - ensuring that the more-able pupils are challenged to think deeply about the mathematics they are learning.

- Improve handwriting and presentation so that all books are of the same high standard.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and other school leaders, including governors, have set a clear direction for the school since the last inspection. Expectations and aspirations are high and all leaders are determined that the school continues to improve. They ensure that it is a place where pupils are safe, can thrive and are extremely well prepared for their next stage in education regardless of their ability.
- There is good capacity within the wider leadership team to build on recent improvements; those who have joined the leadership team more recently are now successfully leading aspects of the school improvement plan. Teachers often work with colleagues in the local partnership of schools; this provides opportunities to moderate the school's work and keep up to date with wider educational issues.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate and clear priorities have been identified. Leaders regularly check progress against the milestones of the school development plan to make sure actions are leading to improvement.
- Teachers and other staff welcome the training opportunities provided by school leaders. Leaders act as coaches or mentors for less experienced staff so their professional development is well supported. Teachers are held accountable by school leaders through appraisal objectives that are linked to pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is based on themes that are well chosen to interest and inspire pupils. The themes are planned so that there are opportunities for learning in depth and using literacy and mathematics skills in other subjects. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. There are regular opportunities to take part in visits that enrich the curriculum. The school also provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sports clubs. The school provides a variety of opportunities that help parents to support their child's learning, including leaflets, online resources and workshops.
- The pupil premium is spent effectively to support pupils academically and pastorally. The additional support provided by this funding ensures that pupils who are disadvantaged are able to achieve as well as their peers.
- The primary sports funding is used innovatively to enable pupils to take part in competitive sporting events. Access to a school minibus enables teams to represent the school in a range of local competitions and this has led to success in athletics and swimming competitions. Part of the funding is used for membership of a local sports partnership, which enables the school to use specialist sports coaches and provide training opportunities for staff.
- Since the last inspection, the local authority has supported the school effectively. The level of support is now much reduced as a result of improvements and the increased leadership capacity of the school.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The activities of the Pupil Council help pupils understand the democratic process as they vote for their chosen representatives. Pupils develop a good understanding of other cultures and faiths; they demonstrate tolerance and acceptance of the views of others and are mindful of society's rules and laws. Pupils have many opportunities within the curriculum to discuss 'big questions' that challenge their thinking and develop their understanding of wider world beyond the school. Older pupils are able to explain why it is important to learn about historical events, for example, when telling an inspector about their upcoming visit to the Holocaust Centre, one pupil said, 'It's important to know about it so it won't happen again.'
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors share the headteacher's ambition for the school and have been proactive in recruiting governors with skills that will be of benefit to the school. They ensure that all members of the governing body take part in training. Recent training has included understanding school data, safer recruitment and how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism.
 - Governors know the school well. They are actively involved in monitoring the progress of the school development plan; they provide a good level of challenge to school leaders and this is well documented in minutes and reports.
 - Governors ensure that systems are in place to meet statutory requirements. They evaluate how the school uses additional funding; they know how the school uses appraisal to make decisions about teachers' pay and that it is linked to pupil performance. They carry out the performance management of the headteacher.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The pupils' well-being and safety is at the forefront of the school's work. Staff and governors keep up to date with training. Concerns are always followed up; record keeping is thorough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use effective questioning to check understanding and to challenge pupils' thinking; they encourage pupils to discuss their learning in pairs and groups so that all pupils have the opportunity to participate and contribute to the lesson. High expectations are evident in all classes; consequently, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils receive guidance for learning through verbal feedback and comments in books. Marking is thorough; it is consistent throughout the school and pupils understand how teachers' comments can help them improve their work. Further challenge is given through 'IMPs' (improvement points) and this is particularly evident in the books of more-able pupils.
- There is some imaginative teaching that weaves together different subjects and inspires pupils to respond creatively. Year 6 English lessons focused on Pablo Picasso's painting of Guernica as part of the Second World War theme. The pupils' interpretation of this painting led to the writing of excellent poems using emotive language. Pupils also reflected on the meaning of the painting, for example, 'I think the torch represents light and hope.'
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Training sessions for teachers have resulted in a more consistent approach and a clear focus on building basic mathematical skills which can then be used in different ways. Some teachers are effectively challenging pupils to explain their thinking, for example, a teacher asked a Year 3 pupil, 'What's the biggest number you know that's a multiple of three? How do you know?' However, in some lessons, pupils do not make as much progress because the work does not always provide opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.
- Occasionally, when the pace slows in lessons, or if work is less challenging, pupils lose concentration and do not show the deep involvement in their learning that is seen in the most effective lessons; progress is slower as a result. A small minority of pupils do not take as much pride in their work and their books are not as neat or as well presented as others.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is outstanding. The culture and ethos of the school centres around the pupils' well-being and safety.
- Pupils feel safe and have trust and confidence in teachers and other adults to look after them. Pupils know they will be listened to if they have any concerns; alternatively they can use the 'worry boxes' that are in all classrooms. They also say that 'friends look out for you'.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and say their children are safe and happy. They praise the school's staff for the care they give to the pupils.
- Pupils say there is no bullying at school. Any occasional falling out is resolved and children are friends again. They know the difference between bullying and falling out.
- Pupils have a good awareness of internet safety and potential risks of online activity. They enjoy the regular e-safety days run by the school. The school provides a range of other training for pupils to ensure that they are well informed about the potential dangers of drug abuse, alcohol and smoking.
- Pupils have the opportunity to watch a children's news programme at school. This was introduced to give pupils a wider understanding of the world. Pupils talk knowledgeably about some current national and world issues. Pupils told the inspector that parents or teachers provide explanations and reassurance with some of the more difficult issues.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say 'people get along' and that they have lots of friends, sometimes in other classes and year groups. Relationships within the school community are good and pupils are respectful and courteous. Adults maintain the high expectations for behaviour at all times of the day.

- Attitudes to learning are positive; while there may be some occasional inattention from a few pupils, lessons are not disrupted.
- Attendance is high. There are very few pupils who have poor attendance. Where the school has concerns about levels of absence, this is brought to parents' attention very quickly and monitored closely.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Standards are high at the end of Key Stage 2; outcomes in mathematics are above average and outcomes in reading and writing are significantly above average, compared to other schools nationally.
- Assessment information gathered by the school is detailed, accurate and thorough. The work in pupils' books matches the assessment information closely. Assessments show the standards reached and the progress made by pupils in all year groups. There is also information showing the progress made by each pupil since joining the school. Although published data has shown rates of progress to be below average in writing and mathematics, current information held by the school shows that progress has improved.
- Pupils read fluently; they are able to use a range of skills to tackle challenging texts which they enjoy. One pupil expressed his enjoyment of *Goodnight Mr Tom* by saying, 'I would have been nervous as an evacuee, but excited to see things I hadn't seen before, like tractors.' The positive reading culture in the school supports the high standards reached by pupils.
- Progress in writing has improved and this can be seen in pupils' books. As part of the school's transition arrangements with the infant schools, writing books that pupils have used for the last few weeks of term are sent to the junior school. They provide a useful baseline from which to work and demonstrate the progress pupils are making in the early weeks of Year 3. Pupils in all year groups are making good progress and are on track to achieve high standards at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Progress in mathematics has improved as a result of a concerted effort by school leaders to improve the quality of teaching in this subject. The school's assessment information shows that since the last inspection, rates of progress have increased, so that where progress was slower, pupils have caught up and are now working at the levels expected of them.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and achieve as well as other pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress from their individual starting points. More-able pupils produce work of a high standard as a result of high expectations and focused challenge. Pupils of all abilities develop skills that prepare them for their next stage in education.

School details

Unique reference number	122769
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10009135

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	366
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jo Lewis
Headteacher	Mike Follen
Telephone number	01636 813432
Website	www.loweswong-jun.notts.sch.uk
Email address	head@loweswong-jun.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school
- The vast majority of pupils are White British; only a few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school received the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school is part of the Minster Teaching School Alliance.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, governors, pupils and a representative from the local authority. They scrutinised the work in pupils' books and evaluated the school's assessment information.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documentation relating to safeguarding, attendance, performance of staff and the monitoring of the school development plan.
- Inspectors also took account of the 135 responses from parents on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Jane Salt, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Damien Turrell	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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