

Stimpson Avenue Academy

Stimpson Avenue, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 4LR

Inspection dates

21–22 March 2017

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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders and governors have not secured consistently good teaching at the school. Leaders have not provided enough training for staff to improve their practice in mathematics.
- Leaders' action planning does not clearly set out the actions they will take to improve teaching and learning. Some parents do not know how the governors are promoting school improvement.
- Teachers' subject knowledge for mathematics is not consistently secure to enable pupils to make good progress, particularly the less able.
- Teachers and other adults do not consistently correct pupils' misconceptions in their writing. Consequently, the pupils' progress is not as fast as it should be.
- Many pupils do not present their work as neatly as they should.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics combined at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 was below the national average.
- Sometimes teachers set work which is too easy or too hard. As a result, some pupils become distracted from their learning.
- In the early years, teachers do not take enough account of what the children already know in order to ensure that they make good progress.
- Teachers' assessments for all the areas of learning in the early years are underdeveloped. Consequently, there is little evidence to show how well the children are achieving in some areas of the curriculum.
- The pupils' skills in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not well developed, particularly in key stage 2.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal has made a good start. She has already improved the quality of teaching at the school.
- The school's safeguarding procedures are robust. The school has excellent links with external agencies to meet the pupils' needs.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent has fallen.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 were close to or above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - making sure that all of the school's improvement plans are clear about what actions are to be taken to improve teaching and are evaluated to show which actions have had a positive impact on pupils' progress
 - ensuring that all monitoring activities focus consistently on the progress that pupils are making
 - ensuring that pupils' skills in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are fully developed, particularly in key stage 2
 - continuing to improve the role of middle leaders, particularly in mathematics, to improve the quality of teaching and ensure that pupils are taught well
 - informing parents about how the academy improvement board (the governing body) is monitoring and leading improvements at the school.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that all staff have good subject knowledge of mathematics to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly for the less able
 - ensuring that the work is pitched correctly to appropriately challenge pupils in their learning
 - correcting pupils' misconceptions, particularly in their writing, to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Improve pupils' personal development and behaviour and welfare by:
 - ensuring that pupils consistently take pride in how their work is presented
 - reducing low-level disruption by ensuring that pupils remain focused on their learning.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years by:
 - ensuring that the teaching consistently builds from what the children already know
 - developing assessments in all areas of learning to support the teachers' judgements of children's achievements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Senior leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good for all pupils through the school. Consequently, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 for reading, writing and mathematics combined have been below the national average for the past two years.
- Some parents have expressed concern about the high turnover of senior leaders and teachers at the school. In the school's recent survey of parents' and carers' views, a significant minority of parents did not know how to contact a governor or know how the governing body is monitoring the school's performance.
- Senior and middle leaders do not sufficiently focus on the progress made by groups of pupils in their monitoring activities. Leaders are well aware that historically the less able pupils have not made good enough progress. However, they have not checked closely enough to see if this group of pupils is making better progress in lessons and that this is confirmed in the pupils' books that they monitor.
- The school improvement and other action plans do have clear success criteria which set out what leaders want to achieve. However, they do not contain the detailed actions needed to reach the aims. Consequently, not enough training, in particular for mathematics, has been planned for the whole staff to improve the quality of teaching.
- The school sets performance management targets which reflect the school priorities. Each term, teachers are held to account for the progress pupils make through pupil progress meetings. Leaders use the prior attainment of pupils well to ensure that teachers have appropriate targets for the progress individual pupils should make.
- The new curriculum coordinator has very quickly identified that the pupils' work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not as good as it should be. This is particularly evident in history and geography in key stage 2. She has informed teachers what skills the pupils should be learning and has started to evaluate the pupils' work. It is too early to judge the full impact of this work.
- The new principal has made a good start. She has focused on improving the quality of teaching. Through her monitoring, some teachers have been identified to receive tailored support to improve their teaching. This has involved observing other colleagues at the school who demonstrate good practice. The school's monitoring, and work in pupils' books, have shown that the quality of teaching is improving.
- The school has reorganised how it spends the pupil premium funding to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils. It now ensures that all disadvantaged pupils receive additional teaching, including the most able disadvantaged, to accelerate their progress. The funding is used effectively. More disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 are on track to make better progress in mathematics.
- The school has raised the aspirations of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders organised a link with a local secondary school which enabled sixth-form students to come to the school and deliver activities linked to science, art and music. This promoted enthusiasm for

the wider curriculum, as well as providing an opportunity for pupils to meet older students who have been successful in their learning.

- The school closely tracks the progress of individual disadvantaged pupils in the intervention groups. However, leaders have not yet analysed the progress made by the whole group in the intervention groups to assist the governors in evaluating the impact of the funding.
- The school closely tracks the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has purchased additional resources to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Through the comprehensive pupil tracking information, the school evaluates the use of funding for special educational needs by checking what progress the pupils are making. The school uses the extra funding for these pupils effectively. Pupils in Year 6 are now making better progress in mathematics.
- The school curriculum is complemented by a range of extra-curricular activities and school visits which the pupils enjoy. For example, the pupils can learn Italian, join the gardening group or participate in drama. Pupils are able to participate in outdoor adventurous activities through residential journeys in Years 4 and 6. The choir recently performed at the Royal and Derngate Theatre in Northampton.
- The school has used the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding well to enable more pupils to learn to swim. The school increased the time the pupils participated in swimming lessons. As a result, the proportion of pupils in Year 4 who could swim 25 metres increased from 50% to 83%. In addition, the school employs a dance teacher to teach pupils throughout the school. This also provides an opportunity for teachers to observe good practice.
- The pupils understand British values well. They vote each year for head girl and boy as well as for members of the school council. The pupils learn about different religions and are tolerant of those who may have different lifestyles to that of their own. The pupils sign up to and follow the school's creed of working in harmony within their multicultural community. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The academy improvement board and the EMLC Trust have not secured stable staffing at the school within the last three years. This has made it difficult to achieve consistently good teaching at the school.
- The academy improvement board do challenge school leaders about the progress pupils are making and the targets that leaders set to ensure that they are aspirational. The members of the board do know how the pupil premium funding is being spent. However, they are less clear about which intervention strategies have had the most impact to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Members of the board discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements at each meeting. They commissioned an audit of safeguarding to ensure that the school's procedures remained robust. A member of the board has checked the school's single central register to ensure that all the relevant checks on the school staff have been completed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The family support and nurture coordinator is highly knowledgeable about the extended services available in the local area to support pupils and their families. She takes the lead for completing early help assessments and tailors the support appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils. Parents are appreciative of her work.
- The school's record-keeping of safeguarding concerns is of high quality. The actions taken by leaders in response to a concern raised are well documented.
- All staff receive regular training on safeguarding. The most recent training has included an update on the government's 'Prevent' duty to protect pupils from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. In addition, staff have been trained on the risks of female genital mutilation (FGM) and e-safety. The school also organised workshops for parents to help them protect their children online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent throughout the school.
- The whole staff have not had enough training about how to teach pupils well in mathematics. Not all the staff have the subject knowledge required to teach pupils effectively and ensure that the pupils make consistently good progress, particularly the less able.
- Conversely, mathematics is taught well in some year groups, particularly in Years 2 and 6, and pupils thrive. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils supported each other well to translate shapes on a four quadrant grid.
- Teachers do not always correct pupils' misconceptions in their writing. Pupils do not always put capital letters at the start of sentences or correct their spelling errors that have been identified by the teachers. As a result, pupils' progress in their writing is not as good as it should be.
- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. The work set for pupils does not consistently match their abilities. In some phonics groups, pupils are learning sounds that they are very familiar with and pupils lose interest in their learning. However, in some groups the pupils thrive because the teaching is pitched correctly.
- Pupils are being challenged to develop their reading comprehension skills. Pupils in Year 5 have been encouraged to develop their inference skills by using clues from the text to build a picture of character.
- The pupils' scientific skills are being promoted well. In Year 3, pupils investigated the friction of toy cars on different surfaces. They ensured that they completed a fair test and repeated their investigation three times to ensure that their results were reliable. Finally, pupils used scientific vocabulary to write their conclusions to their investigations.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The pupils do not consistently take pride in how their work is presented. The work can be untidy in their books. Pupils have not used rulers when appropriate to do so and some pupils do not consistently take care with their handwriting. However, there has been an improvement in the presentation of pupils' books since the arrival of the new principal.
- Pupils recognise the importance of exercise. Many pupils enjoy the extra-curricular sporting clubs available, for example multi-sports and netball. Recently, pupils from all year groups in key stage 2 entered the Northampton Cross Country event with other local schools.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online. They know not to pass on their personal details and to inform an adult if something concerns them.
- The pupils said that bullying is rare. School records from the current academic year confirm this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils do not concentrate on their learning as well as they should in lessons. Pupils become disengaged in their lessons and stop learning. Consequently, pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- The attendance of pupils is broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality has improved. In addition, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent has reduced sharply in the current academic year and is now well below the national average.
- Pupils cooperate well at lunchtime and breaktimes. Adults ensure that pupils wear coats when appropriate and promote pupils playing together. Pupils used the play equipment safely at lunchtimes.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The outcomes at the end of key stage 2 for reading and mathematics have been below the national averages for the past two years. Pupils' outcomes in writing and in English grammar, spelling and punctuation in 2016 were above the national averages at both the expected level and at the higher level at the end of key stage 2.
- Overall, pupils made broadly average progress through key stage 2 in all subjects in 2016. However, disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress in mathematics

than other pupils nationally in 2016. Scrutiny of disadvantaged pupils' current mathematics books shows inconsistent progress through the school, similar to that of other pupils.

- The school has very few disadvantaged pupils who are achieving highly in key stage 2. However, the school has recognised this and put in extra tuition this year for the most able disadvantaged pupils. It is too early to judge whether the impact of this support has resulted in more pupils achieving at greater depth.
- The less able pupils made poor progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016. The progress of this group of pupils through the school is inconsistent.
- Outcomes in the phonics check in Year 1 fell in 2016 and were below the national averages. Current progress in Year 1 is better, although there is still some inconsistent progress because the teaching does not always meet the needs of the pupils.
- The progress made by Bangladeshi pupils is inconsistent. In key stage 1, the pupils are achieving well, except with reading in Year 2. This group's progress in key stage 2 is inconsistent, particularly in writing.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language made broadly average progress through key stage 2 in 2016. However, the outcomes in reading and mathematics were lower than those of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' progress in history and geography is not as strong as it should be in key stage 2. Pupils do not get enough opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge in these subjects. However, in key stage 1, pupils did develop good history knowledge when they learned about toys. Pupils looked at artefacts and were encouraged to ask their own questions to deepen their understanding of how toys have changed over time.
- The most able pupils have been challenged well in key stage 1. In 2016, more pupils achieved highly in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally. In key stage 2, this group of pupils made broadly average progress in all subjects. Currently, in some year groups, the most able pupils are challenged well to reason mathematically and so gain a deeper understanding of the concepts taught.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made broadly average progress through key stage 2 in 2016 in reading and writing. They did less well in mathematics. Scrutiny of current mathematics work in Year 6 shows pupils in this group achieving well and making good progress.
- Outcomes in key stage 1 have improved. Pupils' attainment in all subjects was close to or above the national average at the expected level in 2016.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is inconsistent. Leaders recognise the strengths and weaknesses in the current provision and have reorganised how the curriculum is taught to improve the quality of teaching. It is too early to judge the impact of these changes.
- Teachers do not consistently match the learning to meet pupils' needs. For example, when children were asked to spell words using sounds that they had just been taught,

the words were already on display. As a result, some children found the task very easy and did not have to independently work out how to spell the words.

- Not all adults intervene quickly enough to address the children's misconceptions. In the Nursery, some children were handling scissors incorrectly, but this was not corrected to enable the children to use the scissors more easily.
- Although teachers have evidence of children's progress in writing and mathematics, the evidence for other areas of the curriculum is minimal. Consequently, teachers are not aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the other areas well enough to take timely action to address any potential underachievement.
- Teachers sometimes praise the children for their good behaviour when many have not concentrated as well as they should have in their learning.
- Conversely, when the quality of teaching enthuses the children, they focus well on their learning. During a lesson about three-dimensional shapes, children made cubes out of playdough and independently counted the number of sides using a lollipop stick. They were thrilled when they realised that they had counted correctly.
- In the Nursery, adults ask questions to deepen the children's understanding of the world. When a group of boys were releasing cars down ramps, the adult asked the children which cars would go down the ramp quicker and why. This made the children think hard about their learning.
- The most able children were engrossed in their learning about the properties of a cuboid. They used correct mathematical vocabulary to describe the properties of the shape.
- The school uses the early years pupil premium funding to provide extra staffing and teach small groups. In 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged children who achieved a good level of development was above the outcomes for other children nationally.
- The outcomes for all children in 2016 were much improved from the previous year. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was just below the national average. This represented good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have worked well with external services to meet the needs of the children. The school accessed a speech and language therapist to improve the children's language skills. As a result, adults were trained to deliver a language programme, and this has helped to improve the children's literacy skills.
- The school works well with parents and carers. Parents have the opportunity to come into school on a termly basis for 'Thoroughly Thrilling Thursdays' where they can come and work with the children. In addition, the school has provided workshops to promote reading.

School details

Unique reference number	140628
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10023077

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	436
Appropriate authority	Academy improvement board
Chair	Duncan Mills
Principal	Josephine Milton
Telephone number	01604 631383
Website	www.stimpsonavepri.co.uk
Email address	admin@stimpsonavenue.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is over double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than the national average for all schools.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan or a statement for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school has had a relatively high turnover of staff and of senior leaders in the last three years. The new principal took up her post in January 2017.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed lessons, some jointly with the principal and one of the vice-principals.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work covering a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with: senior leaders; the leaders of English, mathematics, physical education, the early years, and the curriculum; the leader responsible for teaching and learning; the inclusion leader and the special educational needs coordinator; the leader responsible for pupil tracking information; the pupil premium leader; the chair of the academy improvement board; and the chief executive officer of the EMLC Trust.
- The inspectors spoke informally to parents at the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered the 38 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and the 38 responses to the free-text service for parents.
- The inspectors also considered the questionnaires completed by 33 members of the school staff.
- The inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, listened to pupils read and observed the pupils at breaktime and in assembly.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the English, mathematics and early years action plans, minutes of meetings of the academy improvement board, the principal's reports to the academy improvement board, the school's most recent information on pupils' achievement, and information related to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Caroline Evans	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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