

# Waterbeach Community Primary School

High Street, Waterbeach, Cambridgeshire CB25 9JU

## Inspection dates

23–24 February 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and in the majority of classes it is now good.
- Leadership responsibilities are split between a team of middle and senior leaders who are growing in confidence. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Pupils' attainment has risen in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and in 2015 was above the national average.
- Pupils' achievement across the school is improving, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Children settle well in early years and, as a consequence, make good progress from their various starting points.
- Leaders ensure that the school meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs or disability.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and say that it is a school that is fun and friendly.
- Assessment is developing well. Leaders are making effective use of the information they are getting. However, checks to ensure that the information is accurate are still developing.
- Pupils behave very well. They are polite, courteous and friendly. They adhere well to the school's golden rules.
- Many exciting lessons and experiences are planned by teachers. These help pupils to better understand the part they play in their school and the local community.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the work of leaders. Parents play an increasingly active role in the daily life of the school. They are confident that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Governors now know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are, therefore, better able to provide effective support and challenge to ensure that the school continues on its improvement journey.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of skills to enable strong progress in reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling is not yet consistently effective throughout the school, particularly in upper Key Stage 2.
- Leaders' checks on the actions they have taken to improve the school are not focused on identifying patterns in improved pupil outcomes or underachievement, particularly for the less able.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of all pupils so that they make the best progress they can, especially the less able.
  - make better use of ongoing assessment of pupils' learning to reshape pupils' learning
  - consistently apply the school's policy for teaching reading skills.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the school's system for assessment is used to track pupils' progress even more precisely so that leaders can quickly identify and address any patterns of underachievement
  - school leaders routinely monitor actions in the school's plans for improvement to check how successful they have been in improving all pupils' outcomes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. There is a shared vision that enables good teaching to flourish and pupils to behave and achieve well.
- There have been many changes in the school's leadership since the last inspection which have presented challenges. However, the headteacher has reorganised how leaders work together and in different phases across the school. This has not only resulted in better distribution of responsibilities but also a more sustainable model of leadership.
- The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate and has identified what needed to be done to improve the school following the previous inspection. There are now suitable checks on teaching which are more closely linked to pupils' achievement. This information has been used more effectively to put in place teachers' targets for improvement, which are then followed up. Teachers have responded well to the support and development that leaders have provided.
- It is recognised by leaders that the school's system for assessment is still developing. Middle and senior leaders do not use it as well as they could to identify quickly patterns of underachievement and focus actions to mitigate these. As a consequence, on occasion, the school's plans for development are not as informed as they might be about pupils' achievement, for example, in reading and outcomes for the less-able pupils. Leaders do not routinely, therefore, feed in successes or areas for development to the self-evaluation.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress because leadership of this area is strong. The special educational needs coordinator has ensured that teaching assistants are very well trained and equipped to deliver high-quality support to pupils. Teaching assistants have each developed specialisms and regularly share updates and information with their colleagues on, for example, behaviour management, sensory work or delivery of the 'Angry Children' programme within the school.
- Leaders have developed an interesting and stimulating curriculum which offers pupils a wide range of experiences as well as developing skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. In geography, Year 2 pupils have been making a roundhouse in the playground, whilst in upper Key Stage 2 pupils made plaster of Paris fossils in their topic about 'change'. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular clubs which are very popular with pupils and are well attended. Some are very unusual; for example, ballet, photography and 'young film makers'; this demonstrates leaders' determination to ensure that pupils are given a rich experience at Waterbeach.
- Promotion of the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences is very strong. Pupils are involved in many of the decisions about their school and understand the part they play in their local community. They experience different faiths and cultures and learn about people who have inspired others. For example, inspectors saw an assembly where the focus was on perseverance as teachers linked this to the work of Alan Turing at Bletchley Park.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively to ensure that all pupils develop their levels of fitness and understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The school is part of the South Cambridge School Sports Partnership which has supported the training of staff and the subject leader. Leaders have provided pupils with opportunities to experience a range of sporting activities. There are also 12 after-school sports clubs which include multi-sports, Tae Kwon Do and Boot Camp.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding that the government provides for disadvantaged pupils who are well supported by the 'pupil premium champion'. As a consequence, pupils currently in the school make good progress and are offered many additional experiences to complement their school day. For example, adults from the community visit the school to read with these pupils, which they clearly enjoy. They are also encouraged to come to the 'after-school homework club'.
- Leaders have linked with various other schools, including the local secondary school with which they hope to build even closer ties. Such partnerships have supported teachers to improve their work, and helped pupils in their transition to the next phase of their education.
- The school has drawn on the effective support from the local authority, particularly in improving the leadership and teaching of mathematics.

## ■ The governance of the school

- Following the previous inspection, a review of governance was undertaken. Governors say that they found this and the subsequent audit of governors' skills and experience very helpful. Governors now have a good understanding about the strengths and areas of development within the school and work closely with leaders.
- Governors carefully monitor the spending of the school's budget and know well the impact of the pupil premium and sports premium funding on pupils' development.
- Individual governors make visits to the school to check on how well pupils are doing. During these visits they talk with pupils, see the learning that is taking place and look at pupils' work in books. This has helped them to have a clearer understanding of the expectations of the new curriculum and the effectiveness of the school's new assessment system.
- Governors undertake the headteacher's performance management, ensuring that this important responsibility is monitored throughout the year and is related to pupils' outcomes. They understand the link between teachers' performance and pupils' progress and how this relates to teachers' pay.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors take this responsibility very seriously and have assigned a governor specifically to monitor this area of the school's work. Where systems that are currently in place could be tightened, governors move quickly to act upon advice given.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Leaders have taken effective action since the last inspection and the vast majority of teaching is now good. As a result, the proportion of pupils making good progress is increasing throughout the school.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge and skills well and plan learning that is stimulating for pupils. They use questioning well to challenge pupils and to encourage them to think hard about what they are learning. Pupils are generally encouraged to discuss their learning and so develop their thinking skills.
- Mathematics is taught particularly well in all classes because teachers are very confident about what they are teaching and know how to move pupils on in their learning. Inspectors saw lessons where pupils were not only trying out new skills but also applying them to a variety of situations. This was equally evident in the work in pupils' books and conversations inspectors had with pupils about their learning. One pupil who was attempting something new said, 'it is a bit tricky but do-able'.
- The teaching of phonics skills (the linking of letters and sounds) is very effective and as a result, younger pupils use these skills well in their reading. Pupils' writing in their books and on displays in the classrooms shows clear evidence of how these skills are used very effectively in their writing.
- Following a review by leaders, there has been a renewed focus on reading for pleasure throughout the school. As a consequence, pupils experience a wide range of literature and read widely. They say they enjoy reading on their own and to a variety of people who come into the school. However, implementation of the school's policy for the teaching of reading through guided sessions is not yet consistent. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 make strong progress in not just their reading, but also the application of these skills in their writing. They eagerly told inspectors that 'if people don't think what we are writing is exciting, they won't read it'. However, where these sessions are less effective, teachers do not plan appropriately challenging tasks and questions. Opportunities are missed to use the information that these elicit to reshape tasks and challenge pupils. As a result, learning in these sessions is slow and some pupils become fidgety and less focused.
- Teachers plan a wide range of writing for different purposes and styles in both English lessons and through other areas of the curriculum, for example, in science, geography and history. As a consequence, pupils write willingly, often at length and with good quality. Leaders have supported teachers so that they know how to move pupils' learning on. Work with other schools has ensured the accuracy of teachers' assessment of where pupils are in the development of their writing skills.
- The school's assessment system is developing well. Teachers are following the school's policy on marking and feedback consistently. Pupils respond appropriately to challenge or comments made by teachers and they say this helps them in their learning.

- Experienced and knowledgeable teaching assistants who support individual pupils and groups of pupils contribute very effectively to pupils' progress. These adults have a good understanding of how to help pupils to be ready for learning, what these pupils need to develop, and how best to support them to be successful. Their skilled and timely questions help to keep pupils engaged and interested in their learning. As a consequence, these pupils often make very good progress.
- Teachers set interesting homework for the term that reinforces what pupils learn in lessons. Pupils have a degree of choice about which activities they select to complete their 'passport'. This motivates them to try hard and complete tasks, often to a very high standard. There are many examples of work that pupils have done at home, often with the support and guidance of parents. One pupil designed, for example, and built a very large rocket of which he was extremely proud, whilst others experimented with pinhole cameras. Such examples are displayed outside the classrooms for all to see.
- The school's work in developing Waterbeach University is a particular strength. Leaders plan six-weekly sessions throughout the year that are run by pupils and adults in the school, and members of the community and the local university. Activities are designed to develop pupils' life skills, such as health, fitness and social skills, as well as develop specific areas of expertise. Pupils clearly enjoy singing in different styles, using and exploring different art techniques, like Batik, and learning how to use Makaton. Pupils are awarded certificates for their achievements. These form part of a 'portfolio' which pupils keep and which identify the many interesting and exciting opportunities that pupils have engaged in throughout their time at Waterbeach.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils demonstrate good personal and social skills because all adults expect them to be respectful, kind and caring of others. Pupils support others by voting for the pupil 'star of the week' and are genuinely pleased for those who receive this award.
- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. Even the very youngest children are confident and happy to talk to adults about their work. One child animatedly told inspectors about the trip the Reception classes had made to Dinosaur World the day before. She was effectively using the experience she gained from that visit and applying it to a 'show and tell' activity with other children while they were 'playing schools'. Holding up a picture of a dinosaur to 'her class', she confidently asked, 'are there any questions about this T-Rex?'
- Leaders have focused on improving pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work. As a consequence, pupils present their work neatly, in the school's chosen style and with pride. 'Wow' work from both within and outside school is on display in corridors for pupils to see and admire.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe and are well looked after. Pupils say that they feel safe and are taught how to keep themselves safe. In one lesson, pupils were carrying out risk assessments of the outside play equipment.
- Pupils explained clearly how to avoid dangers when using the internet. They know about the various forms that bullying can take and say that bullying is very rare. Teachers deal quickly with any concerns pupils have and pupils know whom to go to if they are worried. School prefects check whether pupils are playing well together and make sure that no one is left out who is standing at the 'friendship stop'.
- The school very effectively promotes the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding as well as preparing them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and democracy. They vote for school councillors and prefects and appreciate how these roles help everyone to 'work really well together'. They readily raise funds for others less fortunate than themselves, for example through BBC Children In Need, and are proud of this work.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and has improved since the previous inspection. This is partly because pupils and parents have been instrumental in putting together the school's behaviour code. Pupils understand, therefore, the rewards and sanctions that are in place and eagerly look to earn a 'pebble' for their class by showing that they can make the right choices and adhere to the 'golden rules'.

- All adults apply the behaviour policy consistently. Staff, parents and governors agree that pupils' behaviour is therefore good in lessons, in and around the school, when on school visits or during school university sessions where pupils work with members of the local community.
- There are very few pupils whose behaviour is challenging. However, the school's consistent approach and sensitive and effective support for these pupils have resulted in a decrease in the number of incidents of poor behaviour as indicated in the school's records. Reporting of incidents is clear and concise and leaders follow up actions taken thoroughly. Use of the school's 'time-out' room is under revision to better reflect the school's caring ethos.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and the school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils work hard in lessons and are keen to do their best, with many routinely checking on their own progress with clear guidance from teachers. On rare occasions, pupils become fidgety where they are not as involved in pupil discussion as they might be or when teaching is not as engaging as it could be.
- Pupils are well supervised in the use of a variety of play equipment for use at break- and lunchtimes, including scooters, tennis rackets and hula hoops. Year 6 pupils look after and put away the equipment and prefects ensure that this equipment is used safely.
- Attendance is broadly average and has improved since the previous inspection. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and ready for learning, many proudly wearing their school uniform. Leaders have made good use of the pupil premium funding to reduce absenteeism. They have worked hard with many individual pupils and families to ensure that the importance of regular attendance is understood. The school's system for checking on pupils' attendance effectively identifies those who are not at school on any given day. However, continued attempts to contact parents who do not respond to the school's first-day calling procedure are not yet frequent or routine.

## Outcomes for pupils

## are good

- Pupils' attainment is improving and, in 2015, was in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils in 2015 who made more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- Pupils' attainment in 2015 at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average and has risen since the previous inspection. The proportion of these pupils who achieved the higher levels in reading and writing was significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in the phonics check in Year 1 was above the national average in 2015. Younger pupils apply their phonics skills well, as was evident in their reading and writing.
- The renewed focus on reading for pleasure ensures that pupils enjoy reading from a very young age. However, in guided reading sessions, teachers do not always provide enough challenge and support for pupils. As a consequence, pupils do not make as much progress as they could in some classes. Leaders have ensured that grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught more systematically throughout the school. However, it is too early to see the full impact of this work in pupils' writing.
- The school ensures that the majority of pupils throughout the school and in most subjects do equally well. Evidence seen during the inspection in pupils' books, in lessons and in the school's own assessment information shows that there is an increase in the proportion of pupils making good progress in mathematics and writing. However, this is not always the case for the less-able pupils.
- There is a pattern of underachievement for the less-able pupils in some year groups. Leaders recognise that this is a priority for improvement. They have demonstrated that when they tightly focus on improving a priority, impact is strong. For example, the extensive work that has been undertaken to improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability is paying dividends. These pupils currently in the school are making progress that very often exceeds that of their peers. This is because of the very effective support given to them by skilled teaching assistants and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The most-able pupils throughout the school are achieving well in writing and mathematics. This is because leaders in these areas have worked hard to ensure teachers challenge pupils to think hard about what they are learning and to apply their new skills well.



- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school is rising. The pupil premium champion has ensured that outcomes for these pupils are enhanced with a variety of inclusive activities both in the curriculum and in addition to it. As a result, there is very little difference in all classes or in reading, writing and mathematics, between this group and their peers. There are equally many examples of these pupils making very strong progress.

## Early years provision

**is good**

- The early years leader has an accurate view of the areas of strength and improvement and has high aspirations for all children. Leaders have worked hard and continually to improve the learning environment both inside and outside the classrooms. As a result, children are actively involved in good-quality learning experiences and activities and are keen to tell adults about what they are learning.
- Children are prepared both socially and academically for life in Year 1. They enter the early years with skills and development that are typical for their age. For the last three years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been above the national average. Children have therefore made good progress because adults have high expectations of all children.
- There is a good balance between activities led by adults and independent tasks. Children choose enthusiastically, especially at the start of the day when they self-select their 'busy learning' activities. When children are working by themselves, adults are skilled at stepping in at just the right moment to move their learning on to the next stage. For example, when children were exploring small numbers, an adult asked, 'what about number 3? How do you know it is number 3?'
- Children's behaviour is very good in both Reception classes despite the difference in the children's personal, social and emotional development. This is because any child not working purposefully responds well to sensitive intervention. Children are kind and friendly and work alongside each other harmoniously, for example, helping each other to load the dishwasher in the 'tea shop'.
- Teachers plan many opportunities to develop children's early reading, writing and number skills. As a result, children's progress in these areas is very good. One child was independently writing about a catodactyl, which she had learned about during the Dinosaur World trip. She told inspectors that she had 'used her phonics to spell it correctly' and that it was 'a herbivore'.
- Parents are involved in children's learning and contribute to the evidence in well-presented learning journeys. All adults check on learning regularly throughout the day and the notes on individuals' progress ensure that leaders have a good understanding of what each child needs to do next. However, the school's system for assessment is still developing. Although there are good procedures in place to track individuals' development, there is less evidence of the impact of leaders' actions to improve overall progress.
- Support for disadvantaged children and those who with special educational needs or disability is effective, ensuring that these children make progress similar to their peers.
- The early years team strongly promotes children's well-being. Staff provide high levels of supervision and support in learning activities. Children settle well in this environment and consequently are safe and well cared for. One parent who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said, 'my child only started school in September and she is flourishing and thriving'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110621
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001943

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	321
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stuart Haigh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Green
<b>Telephone number</b>	01223 718988
<b>Website</b>	<a href="mailto:office@waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk">office@waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="http://www.waterbeachschool.org.uk">www.waterbeachschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–4 December 2013

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average primary school, mainly serving the villages of Waterbeach, Landbeach and Chittering.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are very few pupils learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The number of pupils with special educational needs or disability is below average. The proportion of those pupils who have a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school grounds house an independently managed play group, the Waterbeach Independent Lending Library and an after-school club. The local guide and scout groups also have their headquarters at the school.
- The school has achieved the Green Flag Award and is working on aspects of the Forest School curriculum.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, a number of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made 20 shorter visits to lessons and attended an assembly.
- Inspectors heard some pupils read from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also met with the Chair of the Governing Body and five other governors and groups of pupils, and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of evidence was examined, including the school's self-evaluation and various development plans, the systems to track pupils' progress, and policies and records relating to behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also looked at records of the monitoring of teaching, performance management information, safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work.
- The Parent View online survey responses of 81 parents and of 25 staff who completed the staff survey were taken into account.

## Inspection team

Ruth Brock, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Andrew	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Redpath	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Bartlett	Ofsted Inspector (Shadow)

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