

Alderman Swindell Primary School

Beresford Road, Great Yarmouth NR30 4AB

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders, including governors, have not been able to ensure that there is sufficient good teaching across the school. As a consequence, there is too much variation in the progress that pupils make in different classes and in different year groups.
- The most-able pupils are not provided with enough challenging work in mathematics and this prevents them from making the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing. Despite recent improvements, too many pupils are failing to reach standards that are at or above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching assistants do not receive enough guidance from teachers and school leaders about how to support pupils' learning. As a result, they spend too much time supervising rather than helping pupils to develop new skills and concepts.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. The activities and experiences that are provided during periods of child-initiated play do not help to accelerate children's learning.
- The quality of the curriculum other than for English and mathematics is not good enough. The work seen in subjects such as science, geography and art was of poor quality.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is a safe and nurturing place where pupils are well looked after. Staff know pupils extremely well and take good care of them. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. The importance of good attendance is regularly reinforced.
- Pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding do well and attain similar standards to pupils nationally.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Most pupils make good progress in developing early reading skills. Very good systems are in place to support those pupils who struggle.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are proud of their school and behave extremely well towards each other and the adults who teach them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the wider curriculum provides greater levels of challenge for all pupils
 - regular checks are made on the work that pupils produce in all subject areas
 - the newly formed governing body plays a full role in reviewing the work of the school and planning for improvement.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in subjects across the curriculum
 - providing more challenge for the most-able pupils in mathematics
 - improving pupils' writing skills in subjects across the curriculum
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support learning.

- Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - using information about children's development in all areas of learning to plan activities which excite children's interest and encourage learning during child-initiated play
 - ensuring that teaching assistants fully understand their role in supporting learning during child-initiated play
 - improving the quality of teaching in the Reception class so more children reach a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

requires improvement

- Although improvements have been made to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection, senior leaders have not yet secured good teaching across all year groups, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. In many classes pupils are now making good progress in mathematics and English. However, there remains too much teaching that requires improvement. Senior leaders are aware of where weaknesses lie, and have taken steps to provide teachers with appropriate support. However, at the time of this inspection, their actions had not yet had the required impact.
- Pupils' work in subjects such as history, geography and art was generally of poor quality. Too often pupils are given activities that lack challenge. Senior leaders do not make regular checks on pupils' work in these subjects, nor do they ensure that teachers follow the agreed curriculum plans.
- There have been a significant number of changes to the leadership team since the previous inspection. A new deputy headteacher has added capacity to the senior leadership team. New subject leaders for mathematics and English have been appointed, and they are quickly developing a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject areas. They make regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. They are also helping to ensure that appropriate support is provided for teachers through training and in-class support. Teachers, particularly those new to the profession, value the support and training provided.
- Senior leaders have established an exceptionally caring ethos at the school. Pupils feel valued and are extremely well looked after. The school places a great emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is not as strong due to weaknesses in the curriculum.
- The extra funding received by the school for disadvantaged pupils is put to good use. Most of the funding is targeted at supporting early reading development. Leaders track pupils' progress closely and ensure that appropriate support is provided for any pupil who is struggling. Funding is also used to support educational visits and provide financial support for pupils attending after-school clubs. Disadvantaged pupils generally make good progress. They attained standards that were broadly in line with the national average for all pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015.
- Leadership of special educational needs is effective. Systems and procedures to track pupils' progress have recently been improved and the impact of support is now closely monitored to ensure that it is having a positive impact.
- The school makes very good use of its physical education and sport premium funding. It is used to fund a variety of lunchtime sports clubs and has led to a general increase in physical activity. All pupils are encouraged to run at least one mile every week and levels of engagement are recorded on display boards. Contributions are grouped together with other schools as part of a 'Run-to-Rio' project. Year 3 pupils are also developing leadership skills by acting as sports monitors.
- Pupils develop an understanding of British values. Pupils learn about different religions and understand the importance of tolerance and respect towards people who are different. They are also helped to understand the principles of democracy through the work of the school council.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. Almost all of the responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive. A very large majority would recommend the school to other parents. They rightly believe that their children are well looked after at the school and safe while there. Staff are also fully supportive of the school's leadership team. An overwhelming majority of those who worked at the school at the time of the previous inspection recognise the improvements that have been made. All of those who responded to the staff questionnaire said that they are proud to work at the school.
- The local authority has provided intensive support to the school over the past 12 months. It has also provided very good levels of challenge; an 'improvement board' was established to hold school leaders to account during a period of significant changes to the governing body. The local authority recognises that more needs to be done before the school can be judged as good and has plans in place to support school leaders in making the necessary improvements.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has altered significantly over the past 12 months and only two governors remain in position from this time last year. The local authority has helped in the recruitment of new governors and has provided both support and training to prepare them for their role.
 - New governors bring a breadth of relevant experience to the governing body. They have quickly

developed an understanding of their role and the challenges that the school faces.

- Governors do not yet have a full understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across different year groups and different subject areas in the school. However, governors demonstrated both the capacity and commitment that will be required to support school leaders in securing the necessary improvements. The local authority is providing good support to governors through training and by helping to ensure that appropriate structures are in place.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders, including governors, ensure that appropriate systems for safeguarding pupils are in place and regularly reviewed.

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

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across the school and, as a result, not enough pupils are currently making rapid progress as they move through the school.
- Although there have been improvements to the teaching of writing, this remains an area that requires further improvement. Too few opportunities are provided for children in the early years to develop their writing skills. Across the school, the signs of good progress in pupils' English books are not found in other subject areas, such as science and geography. Teachers' expectations regarding the quality and quantity of written work in these subjects is not high enough.
- Improvements have been made to the teaching of mathematics. There has been a strong focus this year on ensuring that pupils are confident and competent when completing calculations. However, the work provided for the most-able pupils is often not sufficiently challenging. Too often these pupils spend too much time using apparatus when doing calculations, rather than developing and using mental strategies. Opportunities for them to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills, to investigate and solve problems, are also limited. This prevents the most-able pupils from becoming fluent in their use and application of mathematics.
- Reading is taught effectively. There have been recent improvement to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make). Pupils develop positive attitudes to reading and many older pupils read widely and often. Very good support is provided for those pupils who have difficulty with reading. They make good progress as a result and quickly close the gap between them and their peers.
- Teachers follow the school's marking policy in mathematics and English and often provide helpful feedback to pupils on how they can improve their work. However, teachers' marking in project books is less effective. Errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling regularly go unchecked and pupils often repeat basic errors as a result.
- Teaching assistants have positive relationships with pupils and provide good support when working with them during phonics sessions. However, their work in supporting pupils' learning in other subjects is less effective because teachers have provided insufficient guidance on their role. In some lessons teaching assistants spend too much time listening to whole-class teaching, rather than working with those pupils who are in greatest need.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The quality of care, guidance and support, and the strong values that underpin the school's work, ensure that pupils enjoy their time in school, are well looked after and attend regularly.
- Pupils enjoy their roles of responsibility in school. For example, through the school council pupils are helped to gain an understanding of how democracy works; and pupils in Year 3 develop leadership skills through acting as play leaders.
- Pupils' physical development is well promoted. Several lunchtime clubs are available, including street dance and distance running.
- All of the parents who responded to Parent View said that their children are happy in school, well looked after and safe. Pupils also say that they feel safe in school. They are taught about different aspects of personal safety, including how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem at Alderman Swindell.

Behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly towards each other and the adults who teach them.
- Pupils look after each other. They treat each other, and the adults who teach them, with respect. They are proud of their school and help to keep it neat and tidy. In the lessons seen during this inspection behaviour was calm and purposeful. Pupils told inspectors that this was typical and that learning is rarely disrupted by bad behaviour.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are not always reflected in the way that they present their work. Although inspectors saw some neatly presented work in pupils' English and mathematics books, the work in their project books was often poorly presented. Teachers rarely commented about untidy work, or encourage neater presentation.
- School leaders have been successful in improving attendance this year. Current information shows that attendance has risen to above-average levels, and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. However, for too many pupils, this represented slower rates of progress than should be expected.
- Although there were improvements in attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, not enough pupils made rapid progress to reach higher levels. Currently, pupils are not being given enough opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English. Progress in writing in the early years is also slower than should be expected.
- Pupils are now making better progress in mathematics, and this was reflected in the improved Key Stage 1 results in 2015. However, the work seen in pupils' books during this inspection shows that the most-able pupils are often not provided with sufficient challenge, and this limits the progress that they make.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and generally attain well. Improvements have been made to the teaching of phonics and these were reflected in improved outcomes in the phonics check in 2015. The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard was above the national average. Good support has also been provided for those pupils who did not meet this standard and they too are making steady progress in Year 2. The improvements mean that most pupils are competent readers by the end of Key Stage 1 and well prepared, in this key aspect of learning, for the next stage of their education.
- The quality of work in subjects outside of English and mathematics is not good enough. Teachers' expectations of both the quality and quantity of written work in subjects other than English are far too low. Too often the work that pupils are asked to complete in subjects such as science, geography and history lacks challenge.
- Pupils with disability and those with special educational needs make progress at a similar rate to their peers from their various starting points. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that additional support is provided where necessary and tracks the progress that these pupils make carefully.
- Leaders' actions to improve the progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged are working well. They make very good progress and attained levels similar to their peers in 2015.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Many children start at the school with skills and abilities which are below those typically found. Recent improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment led to an increase in the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception year in 2015. However, the overall quality of provision is not yet good enough and there are still too many children who are not well prepared for the next stage of their education when they move into Year 1.
- School leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years. They have failed to ensure that teaching is good or that all adults who support learning have the guidance they need to support children's learning during child-initiated play.
- Children in the Nursery class are well taught during the teaching sessions that are aimed at developing early reading and mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at assessing children's progress and planning activities which meet their needs. However, during the periods in which children

are able to choose from a range of activities, both inside and outside, adults do not provide enough experiences which excite children's natural inquisitiveness. As a result children spend too much time on activities which lack clear purpose.

- Insufficient attention is given to developing children's early writing skills, particularly in the Reception class. As a result many children do not make enough progress in this key area of learning and are not well prepared for work in Key Stage 1.
- Children's 'learning journeys' record their progress over time in different areas of learning. This information, though accurate, is not used well enough to ensure that there are planned activities available for children to help them to develop their skills and knowledge in all areas of learning.
- Staff have developed good working relationships with parents. They have a good understanding of children's development on entry to the school and work closely with parents, who are invited into school on a regular basis to discuss children's progress and establish what they can do to support their children's learning.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not as strong as it should be in the Reception class. Assessment is not used well enough to plan learning which provides challenge for children and builds on their prior learning.
- Children's behaviour is good. They follow school routines and enjoy excellent relationships with adults as well as with each other. Effective safeguarding procedures are in place and the school provides an extremely safe and secure learning environment.

School details

Unique reference number	120974
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10001886

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Simmons
Headteacher	Alison Hopley
Telephone number	01493 842055
Website	http://www.aldermanswindell.co.uk
Email address	office@aldermanswindell.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, for whom school receives additional government funding through the pupil premium, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability, including those with a statement or education, health and care (EHC) plan, is above the national average.
- In September 2015 the school began its conversion from an Infant school into a Primary school. At the time of this inspection there was one Year 3 class.
- There have been a significant number of staffing changes over the past 18 months. Four new teachers have been appointed, including a deputy headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons, seven of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed other aspects of the school's work including an assembly.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, and the subject leaders for mathematics and English.
- The lead inspector spoke with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector met with groups of pupils, listened to some pupils reading and discussed their experience of school.
- An inspector spoke with parents before school and considered the 24 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also considered the 36 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation relating to the school's safeguarding arrangements, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector

Anne Hookway

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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