

Mareham-le-Fen CofE Primary School

School Lane, Mareham-le-Fen, Boston PE22 7QB

Inspection dates	18–19 May 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

- Parents regard the school highly. They are particularly impressed by the quality of personal care and guidance. One parent reflected the views of many when she said, 'This school brings out the best in my child in a caring environment'.
- The headteacher, working closely with the senior teacher, has ensured that teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection, particularly since December this year, now staffing has become more stable.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff plan lessons that interest and engage pupils and pupils enjoy learning. Well-trained and effectively deployed teaching assistants have a very positive impact on the learning of pupils, especially those at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils now make good progress throughout the school. Pupils' work and the school's accurate records indicate that rates of progress have improved well this year.
- Leadership and management are now good. Leaders, including governors, have a clear and accurate view of the school. The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- The school's ethos, values and its curriculum promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The quality of personal care and guidance is very good and pupils feel very safe and secure in school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning. They work hard and concentrate well. They attend regularly and thoroughly enjoy school. Relationships are very good.
- In the early years, children quickly adapt to school life and make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils are not consistently given work that is sufficiently challenging to enable them to fulfil their full potential.
- Expectations of behaviour in the early years are occasionally not high enough.
- Teaching and the use of assessment is not consistently of the highest standard to enable all pupils to make rapid progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take action to achieve outstanding outcomes and progress for pupils in all year groups by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently expect even more of the most able pupils so that they are consistently given work that fully challenges them
 - the school continues to work on improving the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to assure all pupils do their very best
 - in the early years, expectations of behaviour are consistently high.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, since the previous inspection, has acted with determination to address the weaknesses that were identified at the last inspection and to bring about the required improvements so that this is now a good school.
- Leadership roles have been more effectively shared and subject leaders now have a much greater effect on leading and securing improvements in their areas of responsibility. All staff are highly motivated and united in their aim of improving pupils' achievement.
- The school now has a much clearer and more accurate view of its own strengths and weaknesses. Training for staff and checks to ensure that training is fully understood and implemented are now good.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is now more effective. Staff are given clear guidance on how they should carry out their work, for example how they should mark work or how they should use questioning to help pupils learn. Although teaching has improved substantially, a few inconsistencies remain. For example, not all teachers sufficiently use their on-going assessments of pupils' learning in lessons to provide pupils with clear guidance to help accelerate their progress.
- The school has become more outward looking and now works in close partnership with other schools. This has helped staff to learn from one another and, for example, to check that their assessments of pupils' work are in line with those made by teachers in other schools and are as accurate and reliable as possible.
- The local authority has provided good-quality challenge and support to the school over the last two years. For example, local authority advisers have done much to improve the quality of governance, which is now much stronger than at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school's curriculum is good. English and mathematics are given appropriate priority, but not at the expense of other subjects such as science, or art and design. Pupils value their weekly French lessons and these help prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Sport has a more prominent place in the school curriculum than at the time of the previous inspection, and pupils enjoy the much-extended range of sports available to them. The school has spent its additional funding to improve sport and physical education (PE) in primary schools wisely. There are now many more sporting opportunities available to pupils, both within the school day and during after-school clubs. Teachers' attendance at PE lessons taught by specialist coaches also helps develop teachers' skills so that their teaching of games and PE becomes more effective.
- The curriculum is modified well to meet the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs or disability and also for those who struggle with a particular aspect of their learning. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the learning of these groups of pupils. Although there is some modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of the most able, this group of pupils could sometimes be challenged more and undertake more difficult work.
- The curriculum for pupils' personal development is very effective and results in pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's Christian ethos also gives strong support to pupils' personal development.
- Extra-curricular provision of clubs is good and the school has a well-developed programme of visits and visitors to school. The programme includes a residential outdoor pursuits visit that all pupils have the opportunity to attend during their time at the school.
- The school's curriculum places suitable emphasis on ensuring that pupils learn to adopt British values and are well prepared for living in modern Britain. Pupils show understanding of and empathy for other ways of life, and know the importance of showing tolerance and respect for others.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils effectively, mainly to fund effective teaching assistant support for pupils' learning. Throughout the school, pupils' work and school records show that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, both in the school and nationally, is closing well.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a much-improved understanding of the performance of the school and have built up the skills necessary to check that the school is continually improving. They are aware of which groups of pupils are doing really well and which could do even better.

They also know about the quality of teaching in the school and have worked closely with the headteacher to ensure that the quality of teaching has improved over the last two years.

- Governors ensure that the school uses money effectively. They have increased the amount of teaching assistant support provided and enabled the headteacher to increase the amount of additional support provided for pupils at risk of not doing their best. This has helped improve the progress of these pupils. They carefully check that additional funding, such as pupil premium and primary sports premium, is used wisely.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, fully meet requirements and are understood and implemented well by all staff. Pupils say they feel very safe in school, and the school works well with parents to maintain a safe and happy school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school, including in the early years, has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when teaching was found to require improvement. Teaching and learning are now good.
- Behaviour is effectively managed and relationships are good. Positive attitudes to learning and enjoyment of school are encouraged. Pupils are now expected to work considerably harder and respond well to these higher expectations.
- During the current school year, all staff have been working to improve the quality and range of questions they ask pupils in lessons. Both teachers' and teaching assistants' questions help pupils overcome difficulties and deepen their understanding when they are working in lessons.
- One of the most important changes since the previous inspection has been the way that teaching assistants have been trained and deployed. Not only are there more teaching assistants but they now have a much more central role in the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. They have a particularly important effect on the good progress made by those pupils who find learning more difficult.
- The teaching of reading, mathematics and, in particular, writing is much improved and accounts for the accelerated progress pupils are making this year throughout the school. The home reading programme is well organised and many parents make an important contribution to the good progress their children make in their reading.
- Pupils are effectively prepared for the next stage of their education and for the world of work beyond school.
- Teaching is mostly well modified to meet all learners' needs, but sometimes more could be expected of the most able to enable them to reach their full potential.
- The use of on-going assessment in lessons is not fully consistent. In some lessons, staff continually and closely analyse pupils' work and show them how to overcome misconceptions. On some occasions, however, chances are missed to closely examine pupils' writing and mathematics and to show them how to overcome difficulties.

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 much better attitudes to learning than at the time of the last inspection. They now work hard and concentrate in lessons and try and do their best.
- Parents say that the school looks after their children very well and the pupils trust staff to provide good-quality care and guidance. They know staff want the best for them. Pupils gain a clear understanding of British values which, along with the school's Christian values, are effectively promoted. Pupils readily talk about respecting other ways of life and different cultures and beliefs. They show good knowledge of other cultures and ways of life.

- Older pupils support and guide younger children and see it as their responsibility to do their best to help others. Worship leaders and others with leadership roles take their jobs seriously and are pleased to be able to help.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about their behaviour and manners and how these impact on others. Older pupils are particularly polite and mature when talking to visitors.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and are proud that there is no bullying in their school. They are confident that staff would soon deal with any bullying that did arise.
- Pupils act with consideration for the safety of others and know about the importance of acting safely. They are clear about how to keep themselves safe on the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils proudly told the inspector that behaviour in their school is always good, not only in lessons, but also at playtimes, lunchtimes and in assembly.
- Lessons are almost always calm and teachers manage behaviour effectively so that pupils do as they are told, concentrate in lessons and cooperate with each other. In the early years, staff do not always insist that children, especially the boys, concentrate as hard as they could.
- The school has worked successfully to improve attendance and it has improved to above average. Pupils respond well to the rewards provided for good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Rates of progress have improved well since the previous inspection and all groups of pupils now make good progress and rates of progress are continuing to accelerate.
- Historical information shows that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the early years has increased and this year attainment in the early years is set to continue to rise.
- Last year, more Year 1 pupils attained above the national expectation for their age in phonics (the sounds that letter make) and this year standards have risen further.
- In Year 2, in reading, writing and mathematics, more pupils are attaining in line with national expectations, although too few pupils are still exceeding the standards expected for their ages.
- In Years 3 to 6, rates of progress have improved well this year and more pupils are attaining in line with standards expected for their ages. Pupils make good progress overall, but progress in reading and mathematics is a little stronger than progress in writing. The school is aware of this and is carrying out some useful work to improve pupils' progress in writing.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability, and those who find learning more difficult than most, make good progress. The school has done much to ensure that any difficulties in learning are diagnosed at an early stage and that any additional support necessary is provided.
- Disadvantaged pupils now make good progress in their learning and the gap between the attainment of these pupils and all pupils is much smaller this year than previously. This is due to the school's wise spending, mainly on additional teaching assistant support, of the pupil premium funding for these pupils.
- Although rates of progress can now be securely evaluated as good, few pupils make outstanding progress in their learning throughout the school.
- Although the most able pupils now make good progress and are more fully challenged than at the time of the previous inspection, this group of pupils is sometimes not sufficiently challenged to do their very best.

Early years provision

is good

- Most children start in the Reception Year with abilities and skills typical for their age. All groups of children make good progress. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is gradually improving as the quality of provision improves in the early years. Consequently, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children are taught well by the teacher and the teaching assistants. Children's needs are carefully assessed and met well, not only during whole-class and small-group teaching sessions, but also during sessions when children work independently. Staff provide a good range of learning activities both indoors

and outside. Good-quality special areas for key aspects, such as reading, writing and number work, are provided both indoors and outdoors.

- Children mostly concentrate and behave well. However, occasionally a few children, especially boys, are insufficiently checked when they do not concentrate fully on their tasks.
- Children's welfare and enjoyment of school are given high priority by staff and many parents comment on how happy their children are at school.
- The school works in close partnership with parents to support not only children's welfare, but also their learning. The fortnightly letter to parents outlining the planned learning helps parents support their children's learning at home and the learning journey books enable parents to see the progress their children are making at school.
- Children feel safe and secure and are well supervised. Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements are fully met.
- Leadership and management are good. The school is continually working to improve provision and achievement in the early years and monitors the learning of each child meticulously. The headteacher, particularly during the absence of the early years leader, is closely involved with the early years and ensures that provision steadily improves.

School details

Unique reference number	120576
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10009130

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Birchall
Headteacher	Avril Moore
Telephone number	01507 568304
Website	www.mareham.lincs.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@mareham.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2014

Information about this school

- In this much smaller than average sized school, only a few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- There is a broadly average proportion, but only a small number, of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium throughout the school. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been staff changes this school year in two of the three classes.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching and learning in all classes, including jointly with the headteacher. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to see particular aspects, such as the teaching of reading. A range of other school activities, including playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly, were observed.
- The inspector scrutinised past and current work of pupils of different abilities in all year groups and heard some pupils reading.
- The inspector met the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and two other governors. He also analysed documents, including plans for school improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents, and policies and records relating to personal development, behaviour, welfare, safety and attendance. Inspectors analysed information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally and the school's records of pupils' progress.
- Short discussions were held with 31 parents of 42 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection and the views of the 24 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were considered. The 38 returns from a school survey conducted in April this year were also analysed.
- The inspector received the views of staff through discussions. He also received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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