

Lutton St Nicholas Primary School

Marriots Gate, Lutton, Spalding PE12 9HN

Inspection dates	9–10 June 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

- Pupils now make good progress from the early years through to the end of Year 6. This means that attainment is rising across the school.
- Year 1 pupils reached above-average standards in the national phonics (the link between sounds and letters) screening check in 2015.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Leaders provide good support for teachers to improve their practice. This has raised pupils' achievement over time.
- Children in the early years achieve well. They make good progress and consistently outperform their peers nationally. A high proportion achieves a good level of development in readiness for Year 1 learning.
- School leaders have made good use of external support and partnership advice. This has improved the quality of subject leadership to the good standard now seen.
- Subject leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching in their areas and identify how this helps pupils to make good progress.
- Behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and attendance has risen to above the national average.
- The school's caring ethos and 'family' feel makes pupils feel they are cared for well. New joiners are made to feel welcome and quickly settle in.
- Additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The small number of pupils in Year 6 outperformed their classmates in mathematics, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar tests last year.
- Governors use their excellent knowledge of the school to make regular checks on how the quality of teaching is improving pupils' outcomes.
- Safeguarding is effective. Designated leads make sure that all practices are secure and that this remains a high priority for all staff and ensures that pupils feel and are safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school's programme for enhancing the learning of the most able pupils has not been in place long enough to have a strong impact on these pupils' achievements.
- Pupils have limited experiences and awareness of the diversity of modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance pupils' experiences of the different cultures in modern Britain.
- Firmly establish the school's gifted and talented programme to raise the achievement of the most able pupils in every class, by:
 - stretching and stimulating the most able pupils, so that they make more rapid progress and consistently reach the highest standards of attainment
 - involving more parents of the most able pupils in supporting their children's learning at home.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The high commitment of school leaders and relentless focus on raising the quality of teaching has successfully driven up standards across the school. Senior leaders provide good day-to-day support and advice for teachers in addition to effective coaching on how to improve and develop their work.
- Through effective partnership work with a network of schools and the support of a school adviser, subject leaders and teachers share their expertise to raise the quality of teaching over time.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and leaders have an honest and accurate view of the school's current priorities. Leaders act quickly to address any concerns so that the pace of improvements remains rapid. School improvement plans are realistic and sharply focused. Leaders in all areas share the same priorities and checks on the quality of teaching are always linked with pupils' achievement.
- New assessment systems are well understood by staff and are effectively monitored by senior leaders. As a result, staff confidently use the new measures to accurately and reliably assess pupils' achievement.
- Staff freely express their praise and support for the school and value the headteacher's contribution to their own professional development.
- Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that all is now typically good.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer. Additional funding is effectively used to ensure that those who are disadvantaged have full access to all resources and trips and this has contributed to their high levels of confidence and self-esteem, which in turn has an impact on their good progress.
- Leaders at all levels ensure that school policies are followed closely; for example, teachers consistently offer good quality verbal and written feedback when marking and commenting on pupils' work. They encourage reflection and pupils are skilled in completing their 'highlights and spotlights' in response.
- Communication with parents is good and many take part in workshops and attend breakfast briefings when invited to discuss new initiatives, such as the introduction of the outdoor learning programme. Parents are keen supporters of the school and express their praise for the care which the school provides, particularly for the potentially vulnerable pupils. The new gifted and talented programme includes a key aspect to involve parents so that they can play a part in raising their children's achievements. This is work in progress.
- The curriculum interests and engages pupils. Pupils enjoy learning through topics and this is enhanced by trips and visits which serve to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Year 4 pupils were learning about the human body in 'burps, bottoms and bile', and were visited by a dental nurse to learn more about teeth and good healthcare.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well. Pupils learn about core British values through their work in different subjects and topics and have frequent opportunities to reflect and sensitively offer their views.
- Although pupils learn about different faiths, pupils have limited awareness and experiences of multi-cultural society outside their local area. This relative weakness limits their preparation for understanding British values.
- The effective use of pupil premium funding is linked to the successful closure of any gaps which previously existed between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others. Additional funding is used effectively to provide support from the learning mentor and allow pupils access to school trips, including a residential, which enable them to participate fully in all aspects of school life.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school exceptionally well and use their insightful knowledge of the key priorities from the school improvement plan to sustain a high focus on raising achievement. They make very regular visits to see that standards are rising and have good skills to evaluate how the quality of teaching is raising achievement.
 - Governors bring a good range of skills and expertise to their work and use this sensitively to support and challenge the school in equal measure. They look closely at how performance management is used to develop all staff and show flexibility in moving staff between the federated schools. Governors have supported the appointment of a senior teacher to strengthen the leadership team and have seen how this support has raised the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements.

- Governors monitor the impact of additional funds to boost the uptake of sports and develop teachers' skills and confidence. They ensure that the funds are used effectively and have a good impact on raising the profile of health and well-being in the school. Governors oversee the breakfast club, set up in response to parents' requests and check how it has contributed to a rise in attendance and pupils' punctuality.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have good partnerships with parents and external specialists and safeguarding systems and practices are secure. The learning mentor has good relationships with some of the school's most potentially vulnerable pupils and makes sure they are supported and kept safe. Safeguarding training for staff and governors is up to date and the designated safeguarding governor makes thorough checks on all safeguarding practices and termly checks on the safeguarding policy to make sure that it remains fully up to date. Governors know exactly what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern and staff have all of the information they need to provide effective support for pupils in their care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- School leaders have placed a strong emphasis on raising the quality of teaching and learning and have provided good support for teachers, to help them to improve. This is the main reason why teaching is now good.
- Senior leaders provide good-quality support and coaching to help teachers to improve. They check teachers' planning and offer helpful advice to make sure that plans have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Displays and other aids to learning have been improved, so pupils have a variety of different resources for learning from to choose.
- Pupils understand what they are learning about, because lessons follow a common format and teachers set clear learning objectives. Pupils regularly check and review their work using the school's 'guiding lights' assessment system. This enables them to develop a good understanding of what they must do to improve further and to gain an accurate idea of how well they are performing. This has contributed to the rise in pupils' good achievements.
- Pupils frequently make their best efforts to to be successful, because teachers increasingly express their high expectations and belief in what pupils are capable of. For example, in a mixed-age Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, Year 5 pupils were delighted to have correctly answered a question on translation of a shape which had been set for Year 6 pupils. This typifies pupils' competitive natures and their capacity to rise to a challenge set for their older peers. Mathematics is taught well and the whole-school focus on improving arithmetic skills is helping pupils to successfully develop their problem-solving abilities.
- Pupils enjoy reading and their well developed phonics skills lie at the heart of pupils' high levels of confidence and fluency. Good use is made of reading records to encourage pupils to read to adults at home as well as in school.
- Support for the most able pupils varies from class to class. Individual teachers provide their own challenge activities and this lacks consistency from class to class. The school recognises this, and has created a 'gifted and talented' programme for the most able pupils, which is currently in its very early stages of development.
- Teaching assistants are very well directed and make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and progress. They know pupils well and are receptive to their needs, providing an effective balance of support at the right time. As a result, they help to ensure that the few pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress.
- Pupils appreciate and value home learning, which is regularly set from the Reception year through to Year 6 and complements classwork. Additional lunchtime support is made available for those who require it and pupils are so positive about this aspect of school that several expressed a wish for 'even trickier' homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Adults take the time to get to know pupils and their families well and this caring ethos helps pupils to feel a part of the whole-school community. Those joining part way through the year say that they are made to feel welcome and this helps them to settle in easily and make friends.
- The size of the school allows adults to get to know each pupil as an individual and this contributes to the warm, family feel at Lutton St Nicholas. Staff's good knowledge of pupils lies at the heart of the good-quality, tailored support provided for the small number of pupils with additional needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' health and emotional well-being, and has a good network of specialists to call on to support those who are potentially most vulnerable. The 'pupil premium team' and special educational needs coordinator make sure pupils and their families receive regular help and support.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk about their feelings and older pupils deliberately start Year 6 with a residential trip to an outdoor education centre. This helps to boost their confidence and develop team building and personal skills early on.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school. The school's work to raise pupils' awareness of safety through the curriculum is good. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as on roads, around fireworks and when using the internet. They understand the potential perils of social media and how to report concerns relating to cyber bullying.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying and agree that bullying in the school is very rare. They are confident that adults would act quickly to deal with bullying, should it occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen learners with positive attitudes to school. Their positive attitudes and engagement make a strong contribution to the positive and productive learning climate in each class.
- There is a calm, orderly environment in school and pupils conduct themselves well in classrooms and around the site. Pupils understand the school rules and respond quickly to teachers' reminders, so interruptions to learning are uncommon.
- Pupils are supportive of each other and frequently show their mutual respect and regard for others in school. Year 6 pupils act as responsible role models at lunch tables and older pupils help the younger ones playing chess at the breakfast club. This shows their caring natures and typifies the inclusive nature of the school.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance has risen to above average. Few pupils are persistently absent and the learning mentor has proactively worked with individual families to raise the importance of regular attendance.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils now make good progress across the school because school leaders have supported improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, high proportions of pupils are now on track to reach the standards expected for their age by the end of the year.
- In recent years, the small numbers of pupils in Year 6 reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics tests. Their spelling, punctuation and grammar test results were below average. Pupils made good progress in writing, average in reading and their mathematics progress lagged behind. Regularly timetabled arithmetic and spelling sessions have now raised achievements in previously weaker areas.
- Reliable school tracking information and pupils' current work indicate that most groups of pupils are making good progress from their starting points and more pupils than previously are making more than expected levels of progress in all subjects.
- In 2015, the very small number of the most able Year 6 pupils made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in class, the challenges and activities provided for the most able pupils vary in quality so not all most able pupils achieve as well as they could. Leaders have created a programme to enhance the learning and achievements of the most able pupils in every class. This is currently in the early stages of development.

- Pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding make good progress in all year groups in line with others in the school. In 2015, the very small number in Year 6 showed improved attainment when compared with the previous year and in-school gaps successfully closed in mathematics, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are too few pupils to make a reliable comparison with national levels of attainment.
- Phonics is taught well in the early years and key stage 1. In 2015, Year 1 pupils achieved above average results in the national phonics check for the first time.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs or disability in each class make good progress in line with their peers in school. They receive good support in school because their needs are understood and identified early on.
- Standards are rising in a sustained way across the school because the expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher. Pupils are more actively involved in helping themselves to improve and teachers encourage this. Year 6 pupils are set to leave better prepared to start their secondary education than in the past.

Early years provision

is good

- The very small number of children in the early years make consistently good progress. Children enter with skills and abilities in line with those expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has been above the national average for the last two years. Currently, children are working ahead of their predecessors and a higher proportion than previously have reached the 'exceeding' level across all areas. This represents excellent progress.
- In spite of recent staffing changes, teaching remains typically good. Equally good support from teaching assistants means that children quickly settle and focus on learning. Early reading skills are effectively taught through daily phonics sessions, which enable children to make swift progress in their reading and early sentence writing.
- Adults encourage children to reach high standards in all they do and, for example, in a counting activity, children were presented with a variety of different problems to solve and asked to explain how they had found their answers. These high expectations of the Reception children are typical of the culture of achievement, which is replicated throughout the school and prepares children well for the move into Year 1.
- The small size of the group means adults know each child in the Reception class well and they make good use of an online assessment system to track children's progress. This is made available to parents and allows them to share with staff children's achievements at home.
- The early years staff are skilled in identifying where additional help is needed and this is quickly put into place for a child if required. This ensures the good progress of every child in this small, close-knit unit.
- Adults encourage safe play both inside the classroom and outside in the extensive outdoor spaces. Children value the very high-quality, naturally-sourced equipment, which stimulates their interest and inquisitive natures. An example is the water-play area, where children used a pump to fill the tank with water, which elicited many conversations about how the pump works and where the water comes from.
- Children play together harmoniously and are polite and courteous towards each other. They show their good manners while listening to a story and patiently wait for their turn to answer questions about the characters. School routines are well established and children regularly respond to teachers' marking comments and complete home learning. This ensures that they are ready and prepared for the move to Year 1, when the time comes.
- The headteacher's good leadership of the early years ensures that achievement remains high in all areas and children quickly develop their enjoyment of learning and determination to succeed.

School details

Unique reference number	120421
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10011745

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Howard
Executive Headteacher	Luke Whitney
Telephone number	01406 363392
Website	www.luttonstnicholasprimary.org
Email address	enquiries@lutton.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school but the number of pupils on roll has increased since the last inspection.
- The school is in a federation with Gedney Church End Primary School. The two schools are led by the executive headteacher and a single governing body.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and, therefore, eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well below average.
- A slightly higher proportion of pupils than is seen nationally join and leave the school part way through the year.
- The early years consists of children in the Reception year. Beyond Year 2, all pupils are taught in one of two mixed-age classes, each covering two year groups.
- The school forms part of a collaborative partnership of seven schools locally.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club which is overseen by the governing body.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 to qualify for the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed eight lessons, including phonics (letters and their sounds) and guided reading. Five were jointly seen with the headteacher.
- The inspector observed support in class for pupils who need additional help with their learning, listened to readers and attended a whole-school assembly.
- The inspector looked closely at pupils' work in every class and spoke with teachers about pupils' achievements.
- The inspector spoke informally with parents at the start of the inspection and took note of their views through the 15 responses to the online Ofsted Parent View survey.
- The inspector spoke with pupils around the school and met with a group of pupils for a discussion about their experiences of life in the school. She also spoke with pupils attending the breakfast club.
- The inspector met with four governors and held a telephone discussion with a school adviser about the local authority's work with the school. Discussions were held with school leaders responsible for checking English, mathematics, physical education, information and communications technology and for coordinating special educational needs provision.
- The inspector checked school documentation on attendance and behaviour and looked closely at pupils' current progress and the monitoring of safeguarding. She looked at records of governing body meetings and how the school manages staff performance.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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