

Pitsford Primary School

Moulton Road, Pitsford, Northamptonshire NN6 9AU

Inspection dates	12–13 July 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

- Leaders and governors know the school well and have been determined in their efforts to improve the school. Standards of teaching and the outcomes of pupils have improved since the last inspection.
- Governors monitor standards and outcomes in English and mathematics well. They use a range of performance information effectively in order to hold leaders to account for standards of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and at breaktime. Pupils play well together and are considerate of each other.
- Pupils are safe and happy at Pitsford Primary School because staff have high aspirations for pupils and have effective safeguarding processes.
- Outcomes are good. Pupils make strong progress and attain well. For example, this year a higher proportion of key stage 2 pupils attained the expected standard than the national average.
- Teaching is effective. Teachers plan interesting and stimulating lessons and activities for the pupils. As a result, pupils learn well and make strong progress.
- Leaders and teachers have developed a broad and balanced curriculum that engages the pupils and meets the needs of the national curriculum and the context of the school.
- Leaders and teachers have worked effectively to develop the provision in the early years. Consequently, the children learn well in a stimulating and varied learning environment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils who join the school mid-year do not attain as well as other pupils in the school.
- Pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics is not assessed or tracked as rigorously as it is in English and mathematics.
- Leaders do not ensure that children's needs and abilities are assessed quickly enough when they join Reception and this slows the progress of a small number of children.
- Governors' understanding of the progress made by pupils mid-year is inconsistent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the provision for pupils who join the school, in Reception and mid-year, so that they do as well as other pupils in the school by ensuring that:
 - pupils are assessed as soon as possible to identify any gaps in their learning and so that teachers understand their needs and abilities
 - teachers plan learning that addresses any gaps in learning and meets the needs of the pupils so that they can make accelerated progress.
- Improve the tracking and assessment of subjects other than English and mathematics so that this is at the same standard as that in English and mathematics.
- Improve governors' understanding of the progress made by ensuring that they review the progress more often and by aligning their scrutiny of pupil progress information to the school assessment cycle.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and governors know the school well. They have been focused and determined to secure the improvements identified in the previous inspection report and through their self-evaluations. As a result, they have made significant improvements and Pitsford Primary School is now a good school.
- The headteacher has successfully used a range of strategies and approaches to raise the expectations and aspirations of staff and to improve their practice, including feedback from monitoring activities, professional development and performance management.
- Leaders at all levels conduct monitoring activities such as the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. They then provide staff with specific feedback, which enables them to improve their teaching and provide support for pupils who are falling behind. The headteacher has implemented a developmental approach to lesson observation that places the responsibility on teachers to evaluate their own teaching and the observer acts as a coach. The headteacher has also ensured that performance management, including pay progression, is sharply focused on improving pupil outcomes, teaching and personal professional development. Consequently, teaching has improved and so have pupil outcomes.
- The headteacher effectively tracks pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling each term. This enables him to ensure that teachers intervene to ensure that all pupils make strong progress. However, leaders do not track pupils' progress as often in subjects other than English and mathematics and, as a result, they are not confident in their view of the pupils' attainment until the end of the year.
- The headteacher and leaders have developed a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum that meets the requirements of the national curriculum and the context of the school very well. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about and motivated by the themes. This results in high levels of engagement, excitement and standards of work. The themes are further enhanced by visits, such as the recent trip to a sports stadium related to the Olympics and the visit to a well-known factory related to the theme on chocolate.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) and British values is strong. They are planned to run through each theme, as stand-alone units of work such as anti-bullying week and activities such as school council elections. SMSC education, including that on British values, is enhanced by displays around the school, by visitors such as a police officer who worked with pupils on the rule of law, and by visitors from different religions who talked with the pupils and answered their questions. As a result, pupils are well prepared for secondary school. However, on very rare occasions teachers do not take opportunities, provided by pupils, in lessons to explore British values further.
- Leaders have used the pupil premium grant (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) to good effect and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. They have also used the physical education and sport premium well. This has led to increased opportunities for pupils to play different sports, more pupils participating in sport and greater opportunities to compete against other schools.
- A small number of pupils join the school mid-year. Leaders have not ensured that they make accelerated progress to catch up with the other pupils their age quickly enough. This is because the initial assessment of the pupils does not identify quickly enough what they need to learn to catch up and leaders' and teachers' expectations of these pupils are not as high as their expectations of the other pupils. Consequently, the necessary support is not provided quickly enough and progress does not accelerate.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are committed to the school and have high aspirations and expectations for all pupils.
 - Since the hard federation of Pitsford Primary School with Walgrave Primary School, there has been a significant improvement in the provision governors make for, and the standards attained by, the pupils.
 - Governors monitor standards and outcomes well. They effectively evaluate published performance information with the headteacher and evaluate the progress of pupils currently in school. However, they do not evaluate the pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics as frequently as leaders undertake their monitoring of progress, and consequently they are not as well informed as

they could be.

- Governors have monitored the implementation of the school development plan and the evaluation of the plan's impact on outcomes for pupils and standards of teaching very well. They challenge school leaders effectively. As a result, the school has improved since the last inspection.
- Governors manage the performance of the headteacher effectively. They are clear about the governors' role in the performance management of teachers and the relationship between teachers' performance and pay.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated leader for safeguarding ensures that staff are kept well informed about their duties to keep pupils' safe. As a result, staff are alert to any signs that a child may be at risk of harm and know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The safeguarding leader has also ensured that staff understand their legal responsibilities with regard to the 'Prevent' duty guidance on extremism. Leaders ensure that all staff update their training annually and that governors are kept well informed about the school's safeguarding policies and practice.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding systems and processes, including child protection records and risk assessments, are fit for purpose. Procedures to ensure that any visitors to the school are signed in and then supervised are effective. The headteacher and the office staff have ensured that the single central record of the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils is complete and up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge and pupil assessment information to plan challenging and interesting activities that engage and excite pupils. Examples include using playing cards and writing on the desks in washable ink to solve multi-stage calculation problems or using clothing as a stimulus to build a character's history or backstory.
- Teachers' and pupils' consistent approach to marking and feedback enables the pupils to clarify their understanding. Teachers give pupils time to review their feedback (including corrections and editing) and make next steps in their learning. Consequently, pupils learn from mistakes and become more resilient.
- Teachers and learning support assistants support pupils well. Clear explanations, skilful questioning, for example, 'Is that a reasonable answer?', and effective use of subject-specific vocabulary and terminology help pupils to make strong progress. They make good use of time, monitor learning effectively and intervene to address misconceptions. Teachers regularly check that the whole class has understood the work through whole-class questioning. This enables them to identify, then remedy, any of the pupils' misconceptions or deepen their understanding. This enables pupils to make strong progress.
- Teachers' accurate assessment of pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and grammar, punctuation and spelling supports their high expectations of pupils and enables them to ensure that pupils are challenged to do their best. However, their assessment in subjects other than English or mathematics is not as strong.
- Teachers have created attractive and stimulating learning areas. Resources are available for pupils to learn, or organise their learning, independently. Displays support learning, celebrate pupils' achievements and exemplify the high standards teachers expect of the pupils.
- Parents are well informed about pupil progress. All parents who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, or spoke to the inspector believe that their child makes good progress at school. Similarly, most parents believe that homework, which is set in line with the school policy and supports learning well, is appropriate for their child.
- Reading, including phonics, is well taught. Leaders and teachers use a range of strategies to interest and engage pupils with reading, including providing older pupils with £500 to buy additional reading books. Consequently, pupils read widely and make good progress.

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 school's culture is caring, with high expectations for all pupils.
- The pupils the inspector spoke with said that they are happy at school and feel safe. Pupils explained to me how staff keep them safe and teach them how to stay safe. Pupils said that teachers help them to know about the risks they face and how to protect themselves from dangers, through lessons on topics such as e-safety, courses such as 'Bikeability' and visits to specialist provision to learn about stranger danger and drug awareness.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying and are confident that school staff would deal with any occurrence of bullying promptly and effectively if it should occur.
- All of the parents the inspector met with, and the overwhelming majority of those who completed Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, said that their children are safe and happy at school.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective and pupils are well prepared for secondary school. However, on very rare occasions, teachers do not take opportunities that arise in lessons, from pupil responses, to explore British values with pupils.
- Leaders monitor attendance well and intervene effectively when attendance declines; consequently, attendance is good.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The pupils' good conduct and behaviour reflect the school's inclusive ethos and staff efforts to promote high standards for all.
- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of learning are consistently positive. They respond well to adults' requests and instructions. Lessons start promptly and the pupils are ready to learn. They listen to each other well, respect each other's views and take turns. Pupils are equally good when they work as a whole class, on their own, or in small groups. These positive attitudes mean that low-level disruption is rare and this has a positive impact on pupil progress.
- Pupils conduct themselves well and considerately at different times of day, including at breaktime and lunchtime. They move around the school sensibly and play well together.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance, in the school and in their work. They are keen to answer questions, share their ideas and engage in conversation with adults. They understand the school behaviour management system and appreciate the adults' work to help them to improve their behaviour. Pupils and the vast majority of parents say behaviour is good.
- Attendance is good and pupils enjoy coming to school.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils at Pitsford Primary School now make strong progress from their starting points. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- In 2015, key stage 1 pupils attained in line with or above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This was also an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils currently in Year 2 have made strong progress from their starting points. Consequently, the large majority of pupils have achieved the expected standard in reading and writing and almost all pupils have achieved it in mathematics.
- Year 1 pupils have made strong progress in reading, including phonics, from their starting points. As a result, the proportion achieving the national standard this year was above the current national average.
- There have been significant improvements in the achievement of pupils at key stage 2 since the last inspection. This year the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above the national average and broadly in line with the national average for grammar, punctuation and spelling.

- Disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils make strong progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics and their attainment is close to that of other pupils.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management have secured good outcomes for children. The quality of teaching over time is good and the teaching and support pupils receive from early years staff is responsive to the children's needs. However, leaders have not ensured that initial assessments take place promptly enough and this has slowed learning for a small minority of children.
- The headteacher and the lead early years teacher know the needs of the children well and have worked effectively with early years staff to make effective provision for the children. Leaders have made good use of the spaces available and have ensured that the children have exciting and interesting opportunities to learn and play.
- Leaders have developed a stimulating curriculum and environment that meet all areas of learning and the context of the school. The early years environment provides good opportunities for children to learn independently. Outside, there are a variety of opportunities for children to write, such as visiting the role-play hut.
- Children learn cooperatively together, using a variety of resources, such as construction equipment, or when going on a bear hunt for Spencer Bear. Teachers and support assistants provided support to children or a prompt when necessary but they also stood back and observed children finding their own way. Adults know the children well and this helps them to direct the children in their learning. They make very effective use of 'mini me' to direct children to challenging activities. Adults question children well using open questions to encourage children to think and closed questions to check learning or to prompt.
- Children in the early years make good progress in relation to their starting points. However, there are a very small number of children who do not attain as well as others. Teachers have not been rigorous enough in determining the reasons for this. Consequently, leaders are not assured that they are providing appropriate support that will enable the children to catch up.
- Children in the early years are very well behaved and they are eager to join in with all the activities. They show high levels of engagement, curiosity, imagination and concentration. They listen to adults and follow instructions well. They are also learning to listen to each other and take turns well. They play and learn independently and with other children and with adults well. Overall, they enjoy themselves and make good progress.
- The ongoing assessment of children in the early years is accurate and regularly monitored. Teachers use an online assessment and tracking system to track children's progress effectively. It enables staff to respond to children's needs and to provide a stimulating environment and a well-organised range of educational experiences across all aspects of early years. Parents also appreciate access to this system because it enables them to be well informed about their child's progress.

School details

Unique reference number	121850
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10001814

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Denton
Headteacher	James Ayton
Telephone number	01604 880866
Website	www.pitsfordprimary.org
Email address	head@pitsford.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 December 2013

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and cohorts are very small. Consequently, there are too few pupils deemed to be the most able to report on by key stage.
- Similarly, the proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) is smaller than average and there are too few pupils in this group to report on by key stage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and there are too few pupils in this group to report on in detail.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small minority come from minority ethnic groups. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector and the headteacher observed six lessons or parts of lessons. The headteacher also accompanied the lead inspector on two walks around the school looking at short periods of learning in several classes.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work. He also met with a group of pupils, including members of the school council.
- The inspector held meetings with school leaders, the designated person for safeguarding, the business manager, middle leaders responsible for English and mathematics, the early years leaders, teachers and members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and reviewed correspondence from the local authority.
- The inspector considered parents' views, including 27 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the most recent performance information on pupils' achievements, and information relating to teaching, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Derek Myers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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