

Pot Kiln Primary School

Butt Road, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0DS

Inspection dates

1–2 November 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 last inspection, the headteacher has continued to improve the school so that it is now good. Through a determined commitment to move the school forward, leaders have transformed the school in the last two years, so that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve their potential.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and hold leaders to account where performance needs to improve even further.
- Pupils' progress is improving across a range of subjects. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils benefit from a lively curriculum. Their appreciation of British values is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to extend their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Parents overwhelmingly support the school and feel respected and play an active part in their children's education.
- Middle leaders monitor the work of their subjects consistently. However, they do not always check the effectiveness of their actions on how well groups of pupils are doing.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy their learning. In lessons and in less-structured times, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes and respect to each other and adults. However, when the learning is not sufficiently challenging, a minority of pupils become restless and do not work as hard as they could.
- Children in the early years get off to a flying start. They make good progress from their individual starting points. This is because adults ensure that they provide opportunities for children to develop their skills and learn in a safe and secure environment.
- Sometimes, teachers do not adapt their teaching quickly enough to challenge the most able pupils, especially in mathematics. As a result, the progress of these pupils at times is limited.
- The teaching of phonics is not yet consistent. Learning tasks are not matched precisely enough to pupils' abilities. As a result, the most able pupils are not always stretched to achieve as well as they could.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes further by:
 - providing work that challenges the most able pupils in mathematics to use and apply their skills so that a greater proportion of pupils reach the higher standard by the end of key stage 2
 - improving the quality of teaching of phonics to raise the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 1.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management further by:
 - middle leaders precisely checking the impact of their actions on the progress that groups of pupils make in their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's leadership has successfully eliminated the weaknesses identified at the last inspection and driven further improvement across the school.
- The leaders' passion to do the best for the pupils is embraced by all staff. In response to the staff survey, 100% of the staff that responded said that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'This school has a culture that encourages calm and orderly conduct, and is aspirational for all pupils.' Staff are working successfully to ensure that all pupils are equally valued and provided with an ambitious, rich and nurturing experience so that they can learn and thrive during their time at Pot Kiln.
- Leaders' relentless focus on improving teaching, learning and use of assessment is proving successful. The quality of teaching is good. Assessment procedures to measure pupils' progress have improved and are now good. Teachers use information about pupils' current skills to plan effective learning.
- Leaders set ambitious targets for each pupil. Leaders check pupils' progress. Any pupil at risk of falling behind is given additional support to catch up with their peers. However, the activities set for the most able pupils in mathematics are sometimes too easy. This results in these pupils making less progress than they do in reading and writing.
- Leaders regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, reflecting on what they have seen to identify next steps for school improvement. This has had a good impact on raising outcomes for the majority of pupils and in most areas of learning over the last two years.
- Some middle leaders have only recently taken up their roles. Nevertheless, they all have a growing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are not yet checking the impact of their actions on the quality of learning and progress for groups of pupils, in order to use this information to draw up actions for further improvement.
- Senior leaders have communicated the school's 'Pot Kiln Promise' – 'We promise to learn together, smile often, keep safe and respect everybody on our journey to success' – very successfully. Pupils are proud of their school and try hard in their learning. Adults provide memorable experiences that enhance the learning opportunities for individuals. In subjects such as music, for example, all pupils in Year 5 have the opportunity to learn to play a brass instrument. Leaders ensure that pupils have a broad experience of subjects. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their school careers.
- The headteacher and staff are widely respected by parents. Parents who spoke to inspectors on the school playground commented that they felt involved in the life of the school. These parents say that leaders genuinely listen to their views. One parent commented, 'I think it's a wonderful school with wonderful teachers and most of all my son loves coming here.'
- The school uses the additional pupil premium funding well to support disadvantaged pupils, ensuring that they have the same opportunities as their classmates. Eligible

pupils receive extra help with their learning and financial support so that they can attend visits and trips. The appointment of the school's counsellor is very effective in supporting pupils and their families. As a result, the majority of disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading and writing and mathematics.

- The primary sports funding is used well. Pupils are taught by specialist coaches, alongside their teachers. This has enabled pupils to access a wider range of sports than previously and has improved their skills and confidence. For example, girls in Year 5 and Year 6 have been given opportunities to play football and some of them have now joined a local girls' team. Other pupils are taking part in various sports, such as rugby, and hockey.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well through a broad and rich curriculum which is well represented in their books and in the displays around school. The curriculum has been planned well to ensure that there are opportunities to link reading, writing and mathematics skills with those of other subjects such as science, information and communication technology (ICT) and history.
- The curriculum also supports pupils' personal development. Through subjects such as religious education and philosophy, they have the opportunity to consider and discuss issues such as respect for the environment and personal responsibility. Pupils study different religions and reflect on their similarities and differences. Pupils are developing their roles as British citizens as a result.
- The local authority has played an effective role in the improvement of this school through its brokerage of effective training and external checking on the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to improvements in the quality and consistency of teaching across the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors share the headteacher's vision to provide the best for all pupils. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the work undertaken by school leaders to improve the quality of provision. The headteacher's reports to the governors provide information about the progress, attendance, behaviour and development of all pupils.
- Governors hold leaders to account for the way in which pay increases are used to reward good performance, as well as addressing underperformance.
- Following the review of how the pupil premium is spent, a small group of governors now closely monitor the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement that eligible pupils make. Consequently, governors now ask challenging questions to continually improve the outcomes for this group of pupils.
- Governors visit the school frequently. They are keen to improve their own practice, through audits of skills, training and by recruiting governors with the right skills to carry out their responsibilities. This has increased their knowledge of the school which they have used to hold leaders to account for improved outcomes for all pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, governors and staff are vigilant in keeping pupils safe. They are well trained in knowing how to keep pupils safe, including recognising the risks from extremism, social

media or sexual exploitation. Safeguarding and safe recruitment policies are up to date and used meticulously.

- The headteacher has a comprehensive understanding of risks within the community. Inspection evidence from school records show that she responds swiftly and effectively, ensuring that pupils are fully safeguarded when concerns are raised. Through regular training and updates, she promotes a culture where all staff do their utmost to ensure the safety of all and follow school procedures effectively and well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the last inspection, leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching that pupils experience. They take decisive action to improve the quality when it does not meet high expectations. Consequently, the quality of teaching is now consistently good.
- Adults build good and positive relationships with pupils. Teachers know their pupils well, display good subject knowledge and explain activities well. During the inspection, teachers used perceptive and effective questioning to probe pupils' understanding to maximise the pupils' learning and progress.
- Teachers' high expectations are evident in pupils' work books. Work is neat and generally well presented and indicates that pupils are productive in lessons and make good progress.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning, behave well and are keen to try hard. They contribute easily to discussions with each other and respond well to teachers' requests or questions. Sometimes, teachers do not make sure that the pupils who are working without an adult are provided with work that is stimulating and suitably challenging. Consequently, pupils' attention wanes and progress slows. This was evident in some reading lessons during the inspection.
- Teachers use the school's marking and feedback policy effectively. Feedback to pupils, written or oral, is mostly of good quality and identifies clearly pupils' successes or misunderstandings and what they need to do to move on.
- Teaching assistants work with teachers well. They use good questioning which keeps pupils interested and thinking about their learning. This ensures that pupils take the next steps in their learning quickly. In a writing lesson in Year 6 pupils were asked to write a non-chronological report which they initially found challenging. The questioning by the teaching assistant enabled the pupils to create an effective plan in preparation for writing.
- In most lessons pupils are provided with different levels of learning challenges. All pupils are encouraged to attempt the harder challenges. Although the most able pupils are directed towards the harder challenges, on occasions they find the activities easy and are not moved onto more demanding work quickly enough. These most-able pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use and apply their learning in a range of stimulating ways. This limits the progress the most able can make, especially in mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers place a high priority on the development of reading skills. Parents and pupils know that there is an expectation that pupils will read regularly at

home. Pupils are keen to have their home/school diaries completed by their parents to ensure that they can attend the 'reading parties' at the end of term.

- The teaching of phonics is not yet consistently effective. In some lessons the most able pupils can already recall the letter sounds and blends that the adult is teaching. In these lessons, pupils become fidgety and disengaged from their learning because teaching is not helping them to excel quickly enough.
- The learning environment is bright and informative. Resources are of good quality and classroom displays reflect the balanced curriculum that is being delivered across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are supported well. An ethos of care and consideration for others means that most pupils learn well together, sharing resources and ideas.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They take responsibility keenly by being play leaders or members of the school council or class ambassadors.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both within and outside school. For example, a Year 6 pupil said that if they had a problem they would always go and see a teacher who they know would help them sort it out.
- Pupils say that the school provides them with good information on how they can remain safe, for example they recognise the potential dangers that the internet could pose to them. Parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View free text reported that they are positive about how safe their children are at school. One parent wrote, 'The teachers are dedicated to the well-being of these little people.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a calm and happy place. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are well mannered and friendly to each other and also with visitors. During lunchtimes and breaktimes, they play well together, ensuring that nobody is left out of games or activities. Adults ensure that pupils are well supervised and that their play is safe.
- During lessons, pupils listen to their teachers and respond to instructions quickly and without fuss. Their positive attitudes towards their learning are making a good contribution towards the increased rates of progress seen in the school. Disruption in lessons is rare. Occasionally, pupils lose interest in their work if they are not challenged sufficiently.
- Attendance has improved as a result of the concerted actions of the school. At the time of the inspection, attendance was above national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have improved in all year groups and pupils are making good progress across a wide range of subjects. As a result, most pupils attain well, leaving each key stage well equipped for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders monitor pupils regularly with teachers to ensure that any 'dip' in a pupil's progress is quickly addressed. However, leaders and teachers have been less focused on the progress of the most able pupils, particularly in mathematics, which has been slower than that of other groups of pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The special educational needs coordinator assesses the needs of the pupils well, and works with teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that support meets their individual needs.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception. Their starting points when they enter the school are often below those typical for their age. As a result of well-planned learning opportunities, children make good progress from their starting points. Over the last two years the number of children reaching a good level of development has improved. In 2016, the proportion of children reaching the expected level by the end of Reception was above that found nationally.
- The teaching of phonics at the school is currently not as effective as it has been in previous years. In 2016 fewer pupils reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 than in the past. Even so, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard remained above the proportion nationally.
- By the end of key stage 1 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth was also above the national average in mathematics and reading and in line with the national average for writing. Although comparisons with the old system of levels cannot be made, pupils have achieved well and are ready for the challenges of key stage 2. It is evident from their work that pupils, including the most able, make good progress in a range of subjects.
- In key stage 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and higher standard in writing was above the national average. From the evidence in books, pupils who are currently on roll achieve well and make good progress, especially in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school are well supported and make good progress from their varied starting points. The difference between this group of pupils and other pupils nationally is reducing rapidly. For example, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 mathematics were above average and in reading and writing were broadly in line with the national average.
- Displays and pupils' work books show that the majority of pupils are making good progress in subjects such as science, geography, history and religious education.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership in the early years is good. Staff respond by working successfully as a team. They waste no time in using information about children's current skills to develop interesting activities that entice children into learning and play, and to reduce any barriers children may face.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for children of their age. They make good progress across all areas of learning. By the time these children leave the Reception classes, the proportion of children gaining a good level of development has seen a rapid rise since the last inspection, and is now above national expectations for their age. This is because there is consistently good teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Provision indoors and out is exciting and stimulating. Activities have a clear purpose and direction. There are exciting areas for the children to investigate and explore with resources readily available to aid learning. Every opportunity is taken to develop early literacy, numeracy, communication and language skills alongside other areas of the curriculum.
- Early phonics teaching is mostly effective and children are able to recognise initial letter sounds, with some children able to use this to identify sounds within their names. However, where it is not as effective is when the most able children are not stretched to achieve as well as they could.
- Physical education is taught exceptionally well in the early years classes. Children are encouraged to be brave and practise their newly acquired skills in a range of stimulating ways. For example, in one lesson seen, children worked effectively and enthusiastically when using the climbing ropes and practising their balancing skills on the beams. Staff encouraged children to be safe and make informed decisions in their learning. As a result, the children were highly engaged, confident and enthusiastic. Pupils are making very good progress in their physical development.
- Children's behaviour and safety are good. Adults show great care and concern for children's well-being and children respond very well to this.
- There are very positive relationships and communication with parents, and staff work with parents closely to ensure a smooth transition into the school. One parent said, 'My child is happy going to school, loves her teacher and is excited about learning.'
- Leaders have successfully reduced the attainment gap between boys and girls seen in previous years. Consequently, children are now being prepared well for life in Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	124536
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10019611

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louise Arnold
Headteacher	Toni Davis
Telephone number	01787 372107
Website	www.potkiln.net
Email address	admin@potkiln.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years provides for both nursery- and reception-aged children.
- The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is a daily breakfast club and an after-school club run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 21 lessons or parts of lessons, visiting all classes in the school. The headteacher accompanied the inspectors on many of the lesson observations and during tours of the school to see learning and activities in progress.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, during a whole-school assembly, at lunchtimes and at playtimes.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books and discussed pupils' work with them during lessons.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils read in key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders for English and mathematics, all other subject leaders and with the leader of the early years. The inspectors also met a group of pupils and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors also met with parents informally at the start of the school day to gather their views of the school.
- A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents. These included the school's self-evaluation of its performance, the school improvement plan, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governing body meetings and information relating to pupils' achievement. The school's approach to vetting the suitability and training of school staff was also considered.
- The inspectors took into account 102 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspectors also considered 35 staff questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Simon Harbrow, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stewart Caplen	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Hopkins	Ofsted Inspector

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