

# Ditchingham Church of England Primary Academy

Rider Haggard Way, Ditchingham, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 2RE

## Inspection dates

16–17 November 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. Pupils, especially boys, do not make enough progress, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- The most able pupils, particularly in key stage 1, do not achieve as well as they could. This is because teachers do not provide enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teachers do not always provide learning activities that match the needs of the least able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They do not, therefore, make as much progress as they could.
- Middle leadership is not fully developed and so the impact of this tier of leadership on raising the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in some areas of the school's work is not yet evident.
- Teachers do not provide precise enough guidance to pupils so that they know how to improve their work.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is inconsistent. Leaders and governors have not sufficiently targeted additional funds to increase the progress of this group of pupils.
- Adults do not have high enough expectations of presentation of work or behaviour, both in class and around the school. Older pupils lack a positive approach to their learning and low-level disruption in some lessons is the norm.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their understanding of cultural diversity in multicultural Britain.
- Communication with parents is not yet good enough. Some parents lack confidence in the improvements the school is making, for example changes to the behaviour policy, due to not being regularly informed.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. They feel happy and safe in the school's caring environment.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the current position of the school, which has led to some steady improvements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan learning that meets the needs of all pupils, and provides appropriate challenge and support to enable all pupils to make the best progress they can, particularly in mathematics
  - teachers provide feedback that helps pupils to improve their work
  - the teaching of reading is improved so that boys make better progress
  - teachers insist on the highest standard of presentation of pupils' work in their books.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that:
  - all adults have high expectations of behaviour and apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and effectively
  - all adults manage effectively the minority of pupils who do not follow the school's behaviour ethos and values
  - there is enough supervision at lunchtime to support positive behaviour during unstructured times.
- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - middle leaders quickly gain a better understanding of how to effectively raise standards and rapidly improve pupils' progress in the areas for which they are responsible
  - the curriculum provides more opportunities for pupils to gain a better understanding of life in a multicultural society
  - communication is improved with parents so that there is greater confidence and understanding of the school's work.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Although the executive headteacher has risen to the challenges of a school that has had a turbulent past, the changes required have not been rapid enough. As a result, pupils' achievement and behaviour are not as good as they should be.
- The partnership with another local school through the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) has been beneficial in bringing about some improvements in this school. For example, through joint initiatives and moderation, standards in writing in Year 6 improved in 2016.
- The executive headteacher works across both schools in the partnership, as do middle leaders. This has limited the speed at which change occurs. Some parents also feel that the executive headteacher is 'never very visible'.
- The trust has increased its capacity to support the school further. Steps have been taken to support leaders in their role so that rapid change can now take place. Leaders welcome the support they receive. However, currently not enough time is given to middle leaders to carry out their responsibilities. As a result, they do not yet fully understand the needs of this school well enough, particularly if they are based in the partner school.
- The executive headteacher has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, which is supported by the recent trust audit. She understands what constitutes good teaching and judges it accurately. She is clear in her feedback to teachers, who respect and welcome the advice she gives.
- The school's development plan is written jointly for both schools in the partnership. Leaders do not ensure that it correctly addresses the needs of Ditchingham Primary to improve pupils' achievement and behaviour swiftly.
- The staff are happy and the majority feel the school is well managed. They understand what the school is aiming to achieve. They are proud to be members of staff at the school.
- The majority of parents would recommend this school to another parent. However, they do comment that there is a 'strong lack of communication from the school'. Parents would like the school to address this issue.
- School leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of fundamental British values. Subject leaders have targets for their own area of responsibility this year to promote British values as well as social, moral, spiritual and cultural learning. The latter, however, is not as well developed currently. Parents feel that 'school trips are well organised and support learning across the curriculum'.

- The primary sports funding has been used to give pupils access to a wider range of sports and to take part in inter-school competitions. House teams celebrate achievement in sporting competitions. The funding has also been used to employ a teacher who is helping teachers develop their own expertise in teaching physical education. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. Leaders do not yet evaluate the impact of the sports funding on pupils' outcomes clearly enough.

### **Governance**

- Governors have not rigorously checked on how well the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to improve the outcomes of this group.
- As a result of recent changes to the governing body, governors are now holding school leaders to account more effectively. They ask challenging questions to check the validity of the information leaders provide. Finances are well managed and performance management is effective. The governors' knowledge of the school is increasing. However, actions to address weaknesses have not been rapid enough.
- Governors are highly supportive of the school and have a strong vision for it to be good. Governors feel the school is now in a position to bring about rapid improvement. They are committed to promoting the school's success.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- The school has developed a strong culture for keeping children safe. Pupils say they feel safe because they are taught how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of different risks, including the older pupils when they use the internet. There is, however, not enough supervision of pupils at lunchtime to ensure that the same attention is paid to pupils' safety when they are in less structured situations.
- Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that all adults in the school are suitable to work with children. Staff are well trained and fully aware of child protection and risk assessment procedures.
- Those responsible for safeguarding ensure that all records are of good quality and are well maintained. Effective working with external agencies ensures that any concerns raised by the school are followed up and actions noted.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good over time across the school. Pupils therefore do not make the progress they should, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Work in pupils' books shows that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in both quality and quantity of work are not high enough. Teachers do not routinely insist on the highest standards of presentation and effort.

- Teachers do not use assessment well enough to ensure that learning meets the needs of all pupils. Consequently, tasks are often too easy or too hard and so pupils' progress is often limited, particularly in mathematics. This is also true for the most able pupils who do not make fast enough progress, particularly in key stage 1.
- Teachers do not consistently follow the school's own feedback policy throughout the school. Pupils are not always given the support they need to make improvements. However, there is some good practice as was seen during the inspection. For example, in response to feedback and as part of their editing work, pupils were using dictionaries to correct their own spellings and thesauruses to improve their vocabulary.
- When pupils are clear about what they are learning and are fully involved in tasks, they learn well. Where teachers use the school's chosen approaches for providing opportunity for discussion and debate, pupils work hard and deepen their understanding. When they are given the opportunity, pupils enjoy tackling challenging work but such opportunities are limited, especially in key stage 1 and in mathematics lessons across the school.
- Art work seen around the school is often completed to a very high standard. An example of this was the creative approach to self-portraits with pupils using words to describe themselves or words that influence them. Pupils produced work that demonstrated a skill beyond their age.
- Displays in the hall show pupils' work in a range of subjects across the curriculum. When expected, pupils are able to produce work of a high quality.
- Other adults often contribute positively to pupils' learning in lessons, particularly for those who find learning difficult. However, too much time is spent dealing with behavioural issues rather than supporting pupils to make more progress.
- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent because teachers do not provide enough opportunities that challenge the most able pupils to excel. Despite this, pupils use their phonics skills well to read a variety of books. As a result, pupils enjoy reading. The older pupils talked about their favourite authors. However, pupils considered that they do not have enough opportunity to practise their reading at school. They prefer the books they have at home. Leaders need to ensure that they provide books that interest boys and that they have regular opportunities to read a good range of different books.
- The majority of parents say they receive valuable information from the school about their child's progress. One parent felt 'very reassured', as teachers had assessed their child 'spot on'.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils lack the opportunity to develop their understanding of cultural diversity and appreciation of other ethnic groups that make up multicultural Britain.

- Provision for pupils' social, spiritual and moral development is supported through the school's Christian ethos. 'Let your light shine' is used by the school to promote the school's Christian values.
- The school site is secure and visitors' credentials are carefully checked. Child protection procedures are well established and understood by all members of staff.
- Pupils are happy at this school and parents agree. One parent said their child is so excited to come to school that they 'literally skip in every day'.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents agree that the school keeps their children safe. However, during lunchtimes, there is not enough adult supervision to ensure that all pupils are as safe as they could be at all times. Older pupils in the school understand how to stay safe, for example when using technology.
- Pupils understand the different forms bullying can take and spoke about it happening a lot in the past. Pupils feel that if bullying happens now, it is dealt with appropriately by staff. During the inspection, an assembly was seen to support 'Anti-bullying week', which helped pupils know what to do if bullying happened.
- The majority of the pupils feel listened to. They know whom to go to if they are worried about anything and have confidence that adults will support them.
- The breakfast club provides a safe, calm environment where pupils can enjoy playing and chatting to their friends before school starts. One parent wrote about how it has helped to develop their child's self-esteem.
- Pupils have opportunities to learn how to stay healthy. Visitors to school support this aspect of the school's work, such as visitors from the health sector showing pupils how to keep their teeth clean.
- Pupils enjoy their responsibilities and carry out their roles diligently. For example, class champions support school improvement by feeding back the collective views of their classes on areas in the school that they feel could be improved. Some pupils, known as the 'shining group', also help in collective worship and carry out readings.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The majority of pupils behave well around the school. They are polite and have positive relationships with adults. The view of behaviour from the majority of pupils is that they behave well.
- A new behaviour policy has been introduced. However, this is not used consistently by some staff. Low-level disruption in some lessons is the norm, particularly in the older classes or when teaching is not engaging enough.
- A small minority of pupils present very challenging behaviours and often disrupt the calm atmosphere and learning of others. The school works with outside agencies for support. However, this is not impacting quickly enough to reduce the number and seriousness of incidents. Behaviour logs show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded but leaders and staff are not monitoring the impact of new strategies systematically enough to ensure that behaviour rapidly improves.

- Pupils generally have good relationships with each other. Pupils are proud when everyone in the school works together.
- Pupils do not consistently present their work with care and attention. This is because teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are too low.
- Pupils enjoy playtime. The majority of pupils play well together across the school. During the inspection, pupils of different ages were seen playing football happily together. Pupils have a large area with a variety of equipment to use. However, breaktimes are not always well supervised. This leads to noisy, boisterous behaviour that results in accidents. Pupils have a lacklustre approach to going back into class at the end of breaks and lunchtimes. Adults do not insist on the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.
- Leaders have worked hard to promote better attendance rates and routinely check if a pupil is absent. As a result, pupils' attendance overall is now above average.
- The majority of parents say that pupils are well behaved. However, some parents say that pupils' behaviour is not good enough. Evidence during the inspection supports some of their concerns.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Standards in 2016 at the end of key stage 2 were below the national average in reading, mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In Year 6, writing standards were significantly above the national average in 2016. Leaders say this is due to the impact of writing initiatives across the school. Pupils say they enjoy writing. The work in pupils' books shows that pupils are provided with opportunities to write in other curriculum subjects.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2016, boys did not do well enough. This was also true in 2015. Current school assessment information shows that boys generally do not achieve as well as girls across the school.
- Lesson observations, the school's own assessment information and work in pupils' books show that in some classes a significant proportion of current pupils are working at a lower level than that expected for their age. This is particularly the case in reading and mathematics. They are not catching up quickly enough because teaching is not yet consistently good.
- In Year 2, pupils achieved well in mathematics. However, standards reached in reading and writing were below the national average in 2016.
- The progress of the most able pupils is not consistently good across the school. This group of pupils, particularly in key stage 1, do not achieve as well as they could. This has been the case for the last three years. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities that challenge the most able pupils to excel.
- Results in the phonics screening check in Year 1 were broadly in line with the national average in 2016. However, the results have dipped since 2015 when they were above the national average.

- The progress and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school are very inconsistent. Although the school has a small number of pupils in this group, their individual needs, and also those of pupils who are looked after by the local authority, are not considered and provided for well enough.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress in writing and mathematics in 2016.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Most children start Reception with a level of skill and understanding broadly typical for their age.
- The children make the progress expected of them by the end of the year. Most children are soundly prepared for the Year 1 curriculum. Children achieving a good level of development in 2016 was above the national average.
- Leadership of the early years is provided by the partner school. Support has also been identified and provided by representatives of the trust.
- Leaders have in recent times enhanced the outdoor area. Staff use the outside to better support learning and create more opportunities for children to practise the skills they have been taught. This focus for improvement is still in the early stages of development and has yet to significantly impact on children's outcomes.
- The early years class is mixed age with Year 1 children. This is well managed by the class teacher, and expectations for each year group are appropriate. For example, during the inspection, children in Year 1 were estimating and weighing items using weighing scales, and recording their answers. Children in Reception were exploring using the scales to weigh play dough cakes. However, children's misconception that if the scales went down it was 'the strongest', rather than 'the heaviest', was not corrected by adults.
- Teachers ask challenging questions to move children on in their learning. However, sometimes, particularly in the outside area, adults do not take the opportunity to extend children's learning and offer them further challenge.
- Accurate assessments are made of children's learning and recorded thoroughly in children's 'learning journeys'. Notes made by adults describe each child's learning in a range of curriculum areas and identify their next steps. Adults are starting to use this to better inform planning and provide opportunities to accelerate learning.
- Children behave well and build positive relationships with adults and other children. They enjoy learning and often persevere with activities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are kept safe by well-trained staff.
- Communication with parents helps to keep them informed about their child's learning. Weekly letters are sent home, as well as booklets to support learning at home. The school also runs parents' learning cafes which allow for sharing of information about how different subjects are taught, the expectations, and how parents can support at home. These are usually well attended.



## School details

Unique reference number	140545
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10021797

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Mrs J. Robertson
Headteacher	Heather Brand
Telephone number	01986 893 277
Website	<a href="http://www.ditchingham.norfolk.sch.uk">www.ditchingham.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@ditchingham.norfolk.sch.uk">office@ditchingham.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with the Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average.

- The school officially joined DNEAT in February 2014. The trust brokered a supportive partnership between the school and another local school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in eight lessons across all classes, some accompanied by the headteacher. The inspector looked at pupils' work and also attended an assembly.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, minutes of meetings, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their learning and their views about school. She also listened to some pupils read. Pupils were observed at playtime and during lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, several governors and representatives from the trust. The inspector took account of 24 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and met with parents at the start of the school day. The inspector took account of the 15 responses from Ofsted's staff survey and 39 responses from Ofsted's pupil survey. The school's own survey of the views of parents was also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Rachel Welch, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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