

# Eastgate Academy

Littleport Terrace, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1QA

## Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The principal, assistant principals and governors have worked relentlessly to ensure improvements in outcomes for all pupils. As a consequence of their effective actions, teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils throughout the school are outstanding.
- The principal and assistant principals provide outstanding leadership. Their steadfast focus and exceptional commitment ensure that pupils receive both an outstanding academic education and highly effective support for their emotional well-being.
- Leadership of English and mathematics is particularly strong. Leaders have embedded high expectations combined with exceptionally effective approaches to improving teaching and learning. They provide very strong support for teachers to ensure that all pupils are challenged to deepen their knowledge.
- Teachers regularly discuss progress in learning with individual pupils to determine the next steps they need to take. As a result, pupils make excellent progress in many areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations and aspirations for pupils. As a result, pupils are very focused, intellectually curious and eager to learn.
- Pupils are impeccably well behaved. They are kind, courteous and respectful of other pupils and adults. Pupils are encouraged to consider how their behaviour affects others. Consequently, pupils are able to regulate their behaviour and resolve barriers to learning.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and rich curriculum. Pupils are given an excellent breadth of opportunities to develop and hone their skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. British values inform the curriculum and are explicitly taught through activities such as mock elections and debates.
- Early years leaders, teachers and teaching assistants provide children with exceptional support to accelerate their development. The proportion who achieve a good level of development has improved rapidly.
- Although the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make excellent progress in reading, not enough reach the higher standard of attainment. The school has introduced robust strategies to raise the attainment of the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.

## **Full report**

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

- Develop the reading curriculum for the most able pupils so that:
  - attainment for the most able pupils in reading at key stage 2 is raised.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The principal is unerring in her quest to provide an outstanding education for all pupils in the school. Through her leadership, she reinforces the importance of education in transforming the lives of the school's pupils. The assistant principals are equally as ambitious for pupils' academic success. A sustained approach to whole-school improvement through high-quality training has resulted in profound changes to teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes. As a result, pupils make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders know the school well. They support both teachers and teaching assistants to provide outstanding teaching and learning. Leaders collate a breadth of evidence about teaching and learning provision such as regular classroom observations, work scrutinies and checks on pupils' progress. This evidence is forensically analysed and discussed with staff to ensure that strengths are disseminated and areas for development are addressed through training and support.
- Leaders have a coherent, collaborative vision that is communicated clearly to all staff. Responses to the staff questionnaire affirmed the staff's pride in being members of the school.
- The College of West Anglia Academy Trust (CWA Academy Trust) complements the school's training support through structured peer review days where schools share effective approaches and moderate the accuracy of assessment across the curriculum.
- The senior leadership structure of principal supported by three assistant principals is highly effective in how it is organised. It ensures that leaders have both a detailed focus on particular year groups and a coordinated understanding of the literacy, mathematics and oracy (the ability to express oneself fluently and grammatically in speech) needs of pupils across the school.
- The leadership of literacy is a particular strength. Recognising the need for urgent improvement to the teaching, learning and assessment of literacy, the leader collated a breadth of academic research and examples of best current practice in other high-performing schools to improve practice. Regular, intensive training of all staff and thoughtful changes to the curriculum have resulted in outstanding improvements to the standard of pupils' reading and writing across the school.
- The leadership of mathematics is extremely robust. Support for teachers and regular training combined with the development of a rigorous and challenging curriculum have resulted in all pupils making at least expected progress and a substantial proportion making accelerated progress.
- Leaders track pupils' progress and attainment meticulously to ensure that pupils do not fall behind in any area of the curriculum. Their highly effective systems draw together information about each pupil, identifying their strengths and weaknesses so that their needs can be quickly met.
- Senior leaders recognise the importance of middle leadership and have established excellent training for these staff to enable them to meet their responsibilities. Consequently, for example, the leadership of science has improved markedly and a

substantial proportion of pupils at key stage 1 and key stage 2 exceeded national standards in 2016.

- The leadership of extra-curricular teaching and learning is particularly impressive. Pupils are able to develop their 'life skills' through a range of activities such as knitting, cooking and caring for animals. The principal emphasises the importance of a curriculum that raises standards alongside teaching pupils practical skills necessary for healthy lives. The inspector spoke to pupils about the birds, rabbits and guinea pigs in the school. They demonstrated their detailed understanding of how to care for animals and of how this also benefited them emotionally and socially.
- Leaders have a very perceptive understanding of the emotional and behavioural needs of their pupils. They encourage pupils to reflect on their behaviour towards others at the beginning of every school day. Pupils are extremely familiar with these approaches and also use them during the day to resolve issues with other pupils and to help them deal with any uncomfortable issues. The inspector observed four pupils at break using the strategies to deal with emotions roused by their earlier study of a WH Auden poem in an English lesson.
- Leaders canvass the views of parents regularly to determine how best to communicate their child's experiences and progress at school. Information is provided in a range of ways and many parents have the opportunity to speak directly to teachers while having breakfast with their child at the beginning of the day. The early years leader has developed particularly strong one-to-one relationships with parents, ensuring improved attendance and improvements in children's progress.
- Many parents expressed their overwhelming satisfaction with the school. In particular, the parents and guardians of pupils with complex needs described the exceptional educational and emotional support provided by the school.
- Additional government funding, including the pupil premium, is used very well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with other pupils nationally. The effective targeting of funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils make significantly good progress in all areas of the curriculum. One-to-one provision for reading, writing and mathematics is a particular strength of the school, enabling the most vulnerable pupils to make accelerated progress.
- Funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective in ensuring that pupils progress well. Personalised support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have equal access to the curriculum and make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly effective. Pupils value diversity and are curious about the experiences of people from other countries. British values of personal liberty, freedom of speech and democracy are taught through the curriculum and demonstrated through mock elections and debates. Pupils discussed issues that emerged from the European Union referendum with empathy and respect for the views of other pupils.
- The school has a culture of high expectations of all pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. An example of high expectations through the curriculum is the English curriculum in Year 6, which includes an impressive range of British poetry such as Shakespeare's sonnets and

Blake's 'Songs of innocence and experience', which elicit insightful responses from pupils.

### **Governance of the school**

- The chair of governors provides skilful leadership. As a CWA Academy Trust governor, she has oversight of other schools within the trust and is able to disseminate good practice effectively and speedily. Similarly, other governors are passionate about the role of the school in transforming the lives of its pupils and work tirelessly to support it. They are keenly aware of the importance of the school in serving the needs of the local community.
- Governors contribute a range of relevant expertise, such as the governor with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating exclusions and attendance. The governor has a professional background in this area and has been able to guide the school's approach.
- Governors ensure that disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils nationally and hold school leaders firmly to account for their outcomes.
- Through the CWA Academy Trust and the school leadership team, governors receive regular high-quality training in data analysis, safeguarding and in how the school teaches reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, they have an excellent understanding of the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The principal and designated safeguarding leader are passionate about the importance and responsibility of keeping pupils safe. As a result, school-based systems are extremely robust and training is delivered regularly to all staff.
- The school is resolute in its determination to protect pupils. Parents and guardians spoke passionately about the exceptional support offered to them. One parent said, 'I was overwhelmed by the care the school showed to my children.'
- All the necessary checks have been carried out on staff to ensure that they are able to work with children. Centralised CWA Academy Trust systems are informed by the best practice from the range of trust schools. Systems ensuring safe recruitment are maintained very well and the single central record of recruitment checks is monitored regularly by leaders and governors.

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

### **Outstanding**

- The school has focused unwaveringly on improving teaching, learning and assessment, resulting in outstanding outcomes for pupils. The high quality of work in pupils' books, at both key stages, combined with their excellent progress data, shows the impact of outstanding teaching and learning. Staff have exceptionally high expectations of their pupils and this means they challenge them very well.
- As a result of extensive training, teachers have excellent subject knowledge of reading and writing and speaking and listening. They have a highly developed understanding of

how pupils learn, which, in turn, informs how they teach.

- Teachers adopt a consistent approach to teaching writing throughout the school. Pupils use the texts they read to develop their own writing. Pupils are able to edit and proofread their writing to great effect. Pupils talk about themselves as writers and craft their sentences with a high degree of sophistication.
- Both teachers and teaching assistants address pupils' misconceptions and check their understanding throughout lessons. As a result, pupils are able to identify the next steps of their learning with ease and make rapid progress.
- Teaching assistants provide highly effective support for pupils. This support is often personalised, ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable pupils are well met and developed. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. Teaching assistants receive excellent training and collaborate very effectively with class teachers to ensure that no pupil is left behind.
- The teaching and learning of phonics is a strength. A systematic approach is adopted by all staff, ensuring that pupils make rapid progress. Pupils at key stage 2 continue to use their phonics knowledge very effectively to support their reading and spelling. Although the achievement of pupils including disadvantaged pupils declined in 2016, the school has currently embedded effective strategies to ensure that this does not recur. Current progress of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in phonics is strong and pupils are able to use their phonics knowledge to read very well. Phonics teaching in Reception is robust, ensuring that pupils entering Year 1 are very well prepared for key stage 1 phonics.
- Although spelling outcomes were slightly below national standards, the current progress of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils is impressive. Teachers have undergone rigorous training to ensure a systematic, whole-school approach to spelling. Pupils use their phonics knowledge and a range of strategies to ensure improved accuracy in spelling.
- Mathematics teaching for all pupils is highly effective, resulting in outstanding progress for a significant number of key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils. Pupils take pride in their work and relish the additional challenges offered by their teachers.
- Pupils read widely and the library is an excellent source of rich and inspiring literature. Pupils alongside teachers run the library and ensure that it is a welcoming place for all pupils to visit. As a consequence, many pupils develop a love of reading.
- The wider curriculum is rich and varied, such as music lessons involving the playing of African drums, where pupils follow the demonstration of the teacher with exceptional concentration.
- Pupils are encouraged to be intellectually curious, eager to learn and to maintain focus on their learning. For example, pupils in a Year 6 English class demonstrated a highly developed understanding of how a writer's language choices might shape the impact of their writing on a reader.
- Parents say that their children are taught very well at the school and that information about their child's progress is communicated effectively.

**Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders place an extremely high focus on pupils' emotional well-being and as a result, pupils are eager to learn and impeccably well behaved. In addition, pupils are able to discuss and debate a range of different perspectives with respect and consideration for the beliefs and feelings of others. They use the strategies they learn to manage their own emotions and behaviour at school and at home.
- The school has an exceptionally caring, compassionate and nurturing approach to pupils, some of whom are very vulnerable. All pupils spoken to by inspectors voiced their confidence in teachers to resolve any underlying issues with immediacy and diplomacy. As a result, pupils have the utmost confidence in the school to keep them safe. Parents also voiced their profound gratitude for the outstanding care shown to their children.
- The development of positive relationships is explored throughout the curriculum and during discussion time. Pupils develop a very deep connection and loyalty to their fellow pupils and teachers.
- The school has involved pupils in having a say in the running of the school. The British values of democracy, personal liberty and freedom of speech are enshrined in the school's approach. Pupils selected the adult heads of house, the new name of the school and suggested the removal of the key stage 2 afternoon break as it 'was difficult to adjust back to learning in the afternoon'. In addition, pupils in the school council and heads of house are writing a parent-friendly calculation policy and translating it into Lithuanian and Russian.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and are adamant that it rarely happens. They say that when it does, teachers take swift action to ensure that it is stopped.
- The school's 'Thrive' approach enables pupils with complex socio-emotional difficulties to develop highly effective coping strategies. As a result, many of these pupils are able to integrate into mainstream classes and focus on learning. One parent spoke to the inspectors about the transformational role of this approach on her child when she said, 'The school has cracked it.'
- Pupils expressed how equal opportunities were provided by the school and explained, in their own words, how they discussed and understood the protected characteristics of particular groups. Pupils who have arrived from other countries spoke of how welcoming the school had been and how they had adapted to a different approach to learning with ease because of the support they received.

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school's system for rewarding pupils' good behaviour is highly effective. It is implemented consistently by all staff and is an intrinsic part of school life.

Consequently, pupils are extremely keen to learn and behave well in class.

- Pupils play well during break and are respectful of rules. Some pupils play billiards in the hall with a very clear understanding of rules and protocol. Pupils are well supervised and staff engage with pupils positively.
- Breakfast club marks the beginning of the school day and pupils move quickly into class ready to learn without issue. Staff are alert to emotional issues at the beginning of the day and intervene subtly to provide additional support if it is necessary.
- Pupils enjoy school. Improved communication with parents through breakfast club and meetings has contributed to the upward trend in the school's attendance figures.
- The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved markedly this year due to the school's use of positive rewards and through improved communications with parents and carers.
- The rate of exclusions has reduced considerably due to the sustained efforts of staff to ensure that pupils are emotionally prepared for learning. Additional support for pupils who have difficulty regulating their behaviour has resulted in reduced exclusions.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make rapid progress from their starting points across a range of subjects.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 was significantly above the national average in 2016. Current progress information shows that this trend is likely to continue.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 was also significantly above the national average in 2016. Specific steps to improve the writing outcomes of 2015 resulted in a higher proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged and the most able disadvantaged pupils, exceeding the national standard in 2016. Current progress information and the work in pupils' books show that this improvement is continuing.
- Achievements in the English spelling, punctuation and grammar test were slightly below national. However, the current progress of pupils indicates accelerated progress. Teachers receive regular training in the most effective strategies to teach spelling resulting in improved spelling in every key stage. Additionally, teachers receive frequent whole-school and bespoke training to embed the teaching and learning of grammar in their writing lessons. All pupils across the year groups are confident in editing their writing and are able to articulate the different grammatical choices they make to improve their writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent academic and pastoral support. Consequently, they achieve well, both academically and personally.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics has improved considerably as a result of high-quality training for staff. There was a slight dip in the attainment of all pupils and disadvantaged pupils in 2016 but the school has swiftly identified the issues and implemented pertinent support. As a result, pupils are making very good progress in phonics in both Year 1 and Year 2.



- Pupils love to read. The richness of the English curriculum provides pupils with class novels, short stories, poetry and play scripts that help both to develop their understanding of language and to improve their craft as writers. As a result, most pupils make accelerated progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils also voiced their enthusiasm for mathematics and science. They stated that they enjoyed hypothesising and 'working things out'. The additional challenge provided by teachers has supported pupils' improved progress.
- Pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum shows that they are making at least good progress. Work in music, physical education and the humanities demonstrates that pupils are developing well in these subjects.

### **Early years provision**

### **Outstanding**

- Leadership of the early years is highly effective. Having joined the school three years ago, the early years leader has transformed both the curriculum and teaching and learning to ensure that children make good progress. She has a clear vision which is translated into challenging activities for children who are very effectively supported by staff.
- Children join the Reception class with skills and understanding that are below average for their age. The proportion of children reaching the expected level of development has increased markedly. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development matched the national in 2016. Current information and children's work suggest that this likely to continue.
- Children maintain their concentration for long periods of time. Their language skills, a key focus for the early years leader, are developed by staff and they are able to articulate clearly what they are doing and why they are doing it. Inspectors observed children using puppets to share their understanding of complex family relationships.
- Teaching assistants receive high-quality training to ensure that they are able to meet the children's learning needs.
- The key stage 1 approach to phonics and numeracy has influenced teaching and learning in Reception. Children are taught the correlation between letters and sounds very well. The inspector observed children independently writing letters and sounding them out before progressing to writing their names using carefully shaped letter formations.
- Mathematics is taught very well in small groups. Children are eager to explore mathematical concepts in a range of ways, ensuring that they gain an appreciation both of the abstract nature of mathematics and its practical application.
- Children are very well behaved and adept at turn-taking. They are kind and courteous to each other and play with the range of indoor and outdoor activities with thoughtfulness and awareness of the needs of others.
- Consistent with the school's focus on the link between academic success and children's emotional well-being, children learn to cope successfully with a range of challenges. As a result, pupils are well prepared for key stage 1.
- Leaders establish excellent links with parents, ensuring that their children are supported both at school and at home.

## School details

Unique reference number	140663
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10023349

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	The trust
Chair	Melanie Wellard
Principal	Linda Hothersall
Telephone number	01553 773088
Website	<a href="http://eastgateacademy.co.uk">http://eastgateacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@eastgateacademy.co.uk">office@eastgateacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Eastgate Academy is an average-sized primary school serving the community of North Lynn in King's Lynn. It converted to an academy in July 2014. It is part of the College of West Anglia Academy Trust.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

above the national average. The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is above average.

- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding 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 at the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a number of classrooms, some with the assistant principal to observe learning and to talk to pupils about their work.
- Inspectors met formally with the principal, assistant principal and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the leader of early years.
- Meetings were held with seven governors, 12 pupils, the school council and heads of house alongside the CWA Academy Trust director of education and the assessment lead and parents.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed reading with a range of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across the curriculum and across all year groups to determine the accuracy of assessment and the sustainability of accelerated progress.
- The lead inspector checked the school's documentation regarding the school's approach and systems for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and the quality of teaching. She also considered the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans.
- Inspectors took into consideration 14 parent responses and 12 staff responses.

## Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Ofsted Inspector
Ollie Millington	Ofsted Inspector

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