

Weeting Church of England Primary School

Main Road, Weeting, Brandon, Suffolk IP27 0QQ

Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- Although current progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving at the end of key stage 2, pupils across the school are not achieving as well as they could, particularly the most able.
- Teachers do not use assessment consistently enough to plan sequences in learning that allow pupils to make rapid progress.
- There is inconsistency in the teaching of phonics. Some pupils do not use their phonics knowledge effectively to support their reading and spelling.
- Approaches to developing pupils' writing skills are inconsistent. Some pupils do not get regular opportunities to write at length and to practise their English skills.
- The pace of learning is not rapid enough in some classes to challenge and develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding well, including the most able and the most able disadvantaged.
- Children in Reception are not consistently challenged to deepen their understanding of the world and their emerging reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- The role of middle leaders is not sufficiently developed to make sure that they make a significant contribution to school improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- Against a backdrop of joining two neighbouring schools, senior leaders and governors have embedded an ethos of hard work and the urgent need to improve teaching and learning.
- Improvements in teaching have been rapid in Years 4, 5 and 6 and pupils' current progress is strong in these year groups.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly. Pupils are keen to learn and their conduct in class and around the school is good.
- The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are kind and respectful.
- The leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is robust. High importance is placed on making sure that teaching meets the needs of the pupils.
- Parents are generally positive about the school, reporting, for example, that 'the improvements over the last couple of years have made a difference.'

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - providing good opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills
 - ensuring that spelling is taught well across the school
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is taught well in the early years and key stage 1
 - providing pertinent feedback to clarify for pupils how they can improve their work
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information accurately to plan challenging activities.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle leadership to ensure that they are highly influential in improving teaching, learning and assessment at all stages in the school.
- Improve the outcomes for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - ensuring increased challenge in the teaching of writing and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers are accurate and confident in their assessment of the pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have focused strongly on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. In collaboration with the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT), they have forensically identified key issues and embedded support. The DEMAT school improvement adviser conducts a termly review of improvements, which is shared with senior leaders. As a result of the support, teaching in upper key stage 2 has improved markedly and pupils currently make good progress.
- Leaders and governors have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have introduced a programme of staff training in effective teaching, learning and assessment, which has accelerated improvements for pupils' outcomes.
- The needs of staff are clearly identified and their performance is appraised at regular intervals against clear targets, which are linked to the school's priorities for improvement. Appropriate support is provided both through whole-school training and bespoke coaching. However, the impact of the support is not yet consistently evident across the school.
- Within the DEMAT structure, the school is part of the Trinity Partnership with two neighbouring Trust schools. The executive head oversees all three schools and effectively facilitates the sharing of expertise. Teachers have shared approaches to the teaching of reading for understanding, which has resulted in improvements at upper key stage 2.
- Leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Leaders identify the precise needs of pupils and regularly review the effectiveness of differing strategies to ensure that pupils make progress and catch up. They are meticulous in tailoring the right support to meet the needs of pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional funding to support these pupils is used well and is effective.
- The curriculum is broad and rich, offering a range of opportunities for pupils to develop a range of skills, such as pupils at key stage 2 exploring the links between the area's Anglo-Saxon history and Beowulf.
- Leaders make good use of the physical education and sports premium. Specialist coaches from Norwich City Football Club have provided additional coaching for pupils, resulting in increased participation, enjoyment and improved skills. More pupils engage in additional sports provision as a result of the coaching scheme.
- The pupil premium funding has had variable impact over recent years but is now used increasingly well to improve outcomes. Historically, disadvantaged pupils have underachieved in comparison to their peers nationally. However, current progress of disadvantaged pupils in upper key stage 2 is strong and the impact of additional support is evident.
- Leaders place great emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding.

- Pupils are encouraged to make their own personal decisions about faith, such as within the context of the Ash Wednesday assembly.
 - Pupils engage in weekly democratic discussions about school life, which are presented to the school council.
 - Pupils explore many different faiths and cultures to ensure a balanced view of the world.
- Although middle leaders have strong subject knowledge and are effective teachers, they do not yet make a strong contribution to improve the provision in the subjects they lead. They do not challenge weak teaching as effectively as needed. Although they have clear action plans and have begun to provide some tailored support, teaching, learning and assessment in some classes and subjects require improvement.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide good support and challenge to leaders. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and hold leaders to account.
- As part of the Trinity Partnership within the structure of the DEMAT, the governors are able to draw on the strengths and weaknesses of two neighbouring schools to inform the improvements at the school.
- Many governors have a professional background in education, such as in special educational needs and/or disabilities, which informs their understanding and support of the school.
- Governors receive regular training and visit the school regularly to gain an appreciation of pupils' experiences of life at the school. A recent governor visit focused on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated leaders for safeguarding children are diligent in ensuring that pupils' safety and well-being are of utmost importance. There are clear processes for teachers to refer concerns, and these are tracked and reviewed methodically.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and checks on the suitability of staff are carried out appropriately.
- Informing pupils about how to stay safe is embedded within the curriculum, such as understanding the potential dangers of using the internet.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Pupils told an inspector that there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils also said that bullying rarely happens and, when it does, a teacher will always stop it.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across the school, particularly in the early years and Years 1 to 3. Not all teachers have equally

high expectations and aspirations of what pupils can achieve from their respective starting points.

- Some tasks do not support the rapid development of important skills such as reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, do not make the progress that they are capable of.
- Teachers in upper key stage 2 make very good use of assessment information to inform the teaching and learning of reading, writing and mathematics. They regularly check pupils' understanding within lessons to address any misconceptions and to reshape learning to meet the needs of all pupils.
- In lower key stage 2, key stage 1 and early years, pupils are not provided with appropriate support and tasks to accelerate their understanding, knowledge and skills. As a result, many pupils in these year groups do not make sufficiently good progress from their starting points.
- Not all teachers use feedback effectively to support pupils' understanding of how to improve their work. In upper key stage 2, feedback is provided effectively and pupils respond clearly with evidence that they have improved their understanding.
- Teaching assistants are often very effective in supporting pupils to develop their understanding but this is not consistent across all year groups.
- Some teachers, particularly at upper key stage 2, plan and deliver exciting lessons that inspire pupils to want to learn. In an English lesson, for example, reluctant writers were encouraged to explore language through orally rehearsing the speed of the words in a sentence, prior to writing directly onto the table.
- The curriculum offers a rich and broad range of subjects. A specialist French teacher delivers well-planned lessons, ensuring that pupils enjoy the challenge of learning a foreign language. An inspector observed pupils delighting in perfecting their pronunciation of a French song. Their understanding was reinforced through effective modelling by the teacher, and by the visual cartoon and the voices of the cartoon characters.
- Pupils of varying abilities, when reading aloud, expressed their enjoyment of reading. The library is well stocked and pupils enjoy borrowing books. Teachers regularly read books aloud to pupils in every class. Pupils respond empathetically to the issues raised in the texts, such as children in Reception making highly perceptive comments about the character of the tiger in the book 'When the Tiger Came to Tea'.
- The teaching of mathematics is still inconsistent across the school. The mathematics leader is aware of weaker teaching, learning and assessment, and has provided support. However, the impact is not yet evident.
- The teaching of writing is of inconsistent quality. Teachers do not make sufficiently clear how to structure writing for different audiences, purposes and types of text. There are few opportunities for pupils to write at length in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. However, the impact of continuous professional development is evident in the improved teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils' writing skills in these year groups develop rapidly.
- Teachers' feedback is not always clear enough about how pupils can improve their work. Spelling and grammar errors go unchecked.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to access learning in the classroom and make good progress. There is a strong ethos of inclusion in the school and teaching assistants are effective in ensuring that they access the mainstream curriculum.

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 confident, articulate and eager to learn. They support each other's learning through effective collaborative talk.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have very positive attitudes towards school and learning. They are included in every aspect of school life. Staff who support the pupils ensure that they are part of every lesson and provide effective support.
- Pupils' empathetic responses to events and people are well developed throughout the curriculum. For example, as part of the season of Lent, pupils are encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions and the importance of kindness. Many of the pupils who spoke to inspectors expressed the importance of school in forming firm friendships and supporting others.
- Throughout the curriculum, pupils explore different faiths, cultures and experiences, ensuring that they have a rounded, informed understanding of the world. An example of the impact of the curriculum is in Year 6 when studying the novel, 'The Silver Sword'. The text had a profound impact on the pupils. They explored the impact of bigotry and violence, and were able to discuss this in depth with a Polish visitor who spoke about the experiences of Poles during the second world war.
- Pupils learn to stay safe on the internet and in the wider world. Pupils know not to reveal their identity to others and the potential risks when online. An inspector talked to some pupils, who were very clear about how they were very cautious when playing online games, and of how they always informed an adult when they have been contacted by a stranger.
- Support for pupils' well-being is a strength of the school. Pupils explained that staff listen and provide good support to help them resolve any problems. One parent wrote to the inspector, 'the emotional support my son received... has been amazing and had an enormous impact.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have worked hard and successfully to create an orderly, calm school. Pupils are well behaved at all times. Pupils told an inspector that the positive behaviour system had helped pupils to focus and follow instructions.

- There are no school exclusions.
- Pupils' behaviour within the classroom and around the school is good. They understand the rules of the classroom very well and, as a consequence, there is very little low-level disruption and pupils move seamlessly between activities.
- Pupils enjoy a breadth of opportunities to play at break and lunchtime, in well-supervised spaces. The outside area is large and well-structured, to encourage play. Pupils behave well, take turns, and play collaboratively and supportively.
- Until recently, attendance levels for disadvantaged pupils were below the national average. However, leaders have identified the issues and put effective measures in place, which has led to a reduction in absence and lateness.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress and attainment in writing at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 1 were below the national average in 2016. Disadvantaged pupils have underachieved in writing at key stage 2 and key stage 1 for the past two years.
- The work in pupils' exercise books at key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 shows that pupils do not make good progress in writing, because they seldom have the opportunity to write freely or at length to practise and develop their skills.
- Progress and attainment in mathematics by disadvantaged pupils, at both key stages 1 and 2, has been below the national average for the past two years. Teachers' feedback to pupils is not consistently effective in supporting them to make good progress. Teachers do not always address misconceptions, provide effective guidance or review pupils' subsequent understanding.
- Phonics teaching and learning is not consistently effective at key stage 1 and in Reception. This is reflected in the decline in results in 2016, when the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening test was below the national standard.
- In 2014 and 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in early years was below the national average. This improved in 2015, but was not sustained. Although children's mathematics, writing and reading have improved, they are still below the national average. As a result, children are not fully prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not historically made consistent progress. However, the leads for special educational needs and/or disabilities have now tailored support more acutely, resulting in much improved progress by current pupils.
- The current progress of Year 6 pupils is strong. Many pupils are making accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress of pupils in Years 4 and 5 is rapid, particularly in writing, geography, history, and English. Consequently, pupils are increasingly well prepared for the demands of the writing skills needed when they move on to secondary school.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are enthusiastic, curious learners and often ask searching

questions about what they are learning, such as why different plural suffixes in French were used for words that were similar in meaning.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leaders of the early years are aware of the weaknesses of the provision. As part of the Trinity Partnership, leadership is shared among the three schools, which has slowed the speed of improvement. There is a clear development plan, which has ensured changes in the structure of the early years. Other priority areas have not yet been fully addressed.
- Although children are well behaved, follow instructions and cooperate well with each other, many of the activities are not structured well enough to cultivate their skills, knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Phonics teaching is not consistently effective and does not support children's emerging reading skills strongly. Children listen very well to stories read by adults and provide thoughtful, empathetic responses. Children are eager to develop their emerging writing skills but they do not have many opportunities to do so.
- The outdoor area is well structured and conducive to promoting learning. Children are enthusiastic and eager to engage in activities outside, for example, excitedly applying their emerging phonics knowledge to writing about the possibilities of a dinosaur hatching from an egg.
- The school provides a safe and caring learning environment. Children behave well and enjoy the company of others. They work and play well together, showing that they can take turns and share sensibly. They listen carefully to adults and to each other.

School details

Unique reference number	140681
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10023344

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Appropriate authority	The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust
Chair	Ann Pope
Executive Headteacher	Carole Reich
Telephone number	01842 810587
Website	www.trinitypartnership.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	head@weeting.norfolk.sch.uk
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 Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school converted to academy status in 2014. It is part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT).
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below 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.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is below average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons, some observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher; deputy headteacher; the leaders of mathematics, English, science, modern foreign languages, physical education, early years, special educational needs and/or disabilities; three governors; two representatives of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust; pupils and teachers.
- Pupils' books and records of their progress were scrutinised.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their reading experiences with them.
- Account was taken of the 20 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. Inspectors also talked informally to parents at the start of the school day.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's development plan and analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, safeguarding policies and records, and records made by leaders on the quality of teaching.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ollie Millington

Ofsted Inspector

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