

# Whitefriars Church of England Primary Academy

Whitefriars Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 5AH

## Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, staff, governors and trustees share high aspirations and ambition for pupils' academic achievement and their personal development. Collectively, they are purposeful in addressing any identified weaknesses.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is a high priority in the school's plan for improvement.
- Pupil premium is spent wisely and with good results. Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to other pupils, as are pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school's strong values for life promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development exceedingly well.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and understanding of how to keep themselves safe are outstanding. Their conduct is impeccable and contributes hugely to their good achievement.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are robust.
- Effective leadership in the early years ensures that children quickly learn how to take responsibility and develop independence. They make good progress from their different starting points, especially in learning to read.
- Leaders have taken incisive action to address weaknesses in teaching and learning that led to the underachievement of Year 6 pupils in reading and mathematics in the 2016 national tests.
- Teaching is consistently good. It is improving current pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The contribution of teaching assistants in promoting good learning is variable in its quality and effectiveness.
- Pupils are not challenged enough by the level of difficulty of tasks and in the application of their knowledge, skills and understanding in writing and mathematics, especially the most able.
- The school is in the process of revising its systems for assessing how well pupils are learning. This is work in progress and not fully established and embedded so that it is accurate and reliable.

## Full report

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

- Increase the proportions of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standard and working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics to at least the national averages by ensuring that:
  - assessment practice is robust from entry to Reception onwards so that pupils' progress and attainment can be judged accurately
  - in all subjects, the most able pupils are sufficiently stretched and challenged to extend and deepen their understanding
  - pupils write more frequently at length using their knowledge of English grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling to sustain and develop their ideas
  - pupils develop a wider range of skills in using and applying mathematics to reason and solve problems
  - there is consistency in the effectiveness of teaching assistants' delivery when they are leading learning.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders, governors and trustees share a common purpose in putting pupils and their achievement first. Their effective leadership provides the local community with an inclusive, child-centred school where equality of opportunity is regarded as crucial.
- In particular, the headteacher is an inspiring leader who motivates, influences and challenges staff to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning. Effective systems for appraisal, with specific targets linked to the school's priorities for improvement, ensure that staff understand their contribution to raising pupils' achievement. Staff receive regular training and coaching to develop their skills.
- The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate. A wide range of information is gathered through effective systems for monitoring the school's work that informs leaders' judgements. They are then able to set goals for improvement that are the right ones. Monitoring by the school's improvement team provides a valuable external view that through rigorous monitoring is able to endorse or challenge the school's judgements.
- All of the school's priorities are linked to pupils' progress and attainment, and rightly so. The significant decline in the 2016 key stage 2 national test results was an unwelcome blow to the steady improvement from the previous inspection up to 2015.
- Leaders quickly identified reasons underpinning the disappointing results. Plans are firmly in place to reverse the trend and these are making a difference. Most pupils, in all classes, are currently making good progress from their starting points. Vulnerable groups are a top priority and leaders are keenly checking for improvements, especially in Year 6.
- The school communicates and promotes its strong values extremely well. Pupils not only show that they understand the values, but they also do their best to live by them. The values are threaded through the curriculum covering areas such as feelings, getting along with others, and different points of view. This contributes to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Curriculum provision is broad, balanced and enriched with many exciting and engaging activities before, during and after school. This contributes strongly to pupils' thirst for learning and the good progress that most are making currently. The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply the knowledge, skills and understanding they acquire in English and mathematics, particularly the most able.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the sports funding increases pupils' participation in physical education and sporting activities as intended. Pupils benefit from extra-curricular sports led by specialists at lunchtime and after school and attendance at sports festivals. Pupils who do not readily engage in physical activities are targeted especially.
- Special needs funding is used well to enhance provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they make good progress from their starting points. The school's information about support for pupils who have

special educational needs and/or disabilities explains its approach clearly.

- Pupil premium is spent wisely to diminish the difference between disadvantaged pupils' achievement and other pupils. Extra specialist provision includes, for example, access to professional counselling, which is beneficial to pupils with emotional or mental health needs and helps to place them in a better position to learn well.
- The school works closely and regularly with a wide range of professionals and draws upon their expertise to achieve good outcomes for pupils.
- Through in-house training, access to external courses and coaching, the headteacher is steadily building and strengthening subject leaders' skills so that they make a significant contribution towards raising attainment. This is a priority in this year's strategic plan for improvement and it remains work in progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- The trust board provides effective, well organised and structured governance.
- The board has a clear committee structure with a remit to scrutinise the work of the trust. It fulfils its core functions effectively to provide the school with clear strategic direction, holding leaders to account for pupils' performance and ensuring that money is well spent.
- The regional standards group, overseen by regional trustees, provides the school with the right balance of support and challenge. Minutes of meetings show that this work is rigorous and challenging. Findings are reported to trustees via the academies improvement director. These layers of monitoring and evaluation provide the trust with a realistic and accurate view of the school's work.
- Meetings are regular and well attended.
- Local governance at academy level is conducted by the governing body. Clear lines of accountability, reviewed annually, ensure that the governing body knows precisely what it is responsible for.
- Governors know the school well. They visit regularly and sit in on leaders' discussions about pupils' progress. They are familiar with the school's internal information about pupils' achievement and the school's national published data. This places them in a strong position to ask pertinent questions about all groups of pupils' current achievement, and they do.
- Spending of pupil premium, the sports funding and funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully monitored to ensure that it makes a difference to pupils' academic performance.
- The governing body has not ensured that the school's website is kept up to date with information that it is required to publish. Some missing information was uploaded during the inspection to ensure compliance with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, give safeguarding a high priority. Their mantra 'it could happen here' keeps everyone alert to their responsibility to safeguard pupils. Through excellent teamwork, leaders have developed robust procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Regular and thorough safeguarding training means that staff are vigilant, know what to look for, and fully understand their responsibilities to protect pupils. Clear lines of communication, fully understood by all staff, ensure that concerns, however small, are passed on and acted upon quickly.
- The designated lead professionals for safeguarding prioritise their work effectively and monitor the progress of each case vigilantly.
- Record-keeping is of consistently high quality, enabling leaders to retain an overview of child protection cases and to supervise the actions being taken to support the most vulnerable pupils.
- The single central record of statutory checks on all staff and adults working with pupils is completed properly to ensure their suitability to work with children. Requirements for recruiting staff are followed carefully and documents to evidence this are held securely in staff files.
- The inclusion team works closely with other agencies such as the police, social services and health professionals to share important information and assess any potential risks.
- Support provided for families facing periods of difficulty is extensive. Parents know that the school will always put their children first and take appropriate steps to ensure their safety.

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

**Good**

- Good relationships between pupils and staff, coupled with teachers' high expectations for behaviour and work ethic, lend confidence to pupils' learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and motivated professionals who go the extra mile to make learning interesting and enjoyable for pupils.
- Classrooms are well-organised, inviting spaces for learning with many prompts and reminders on display that teachers and pupils use and refer to while they are learning.
- Most teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and use this well to identify when pupils have not understood. They adjust the teaching accordingly. In this way, any misconceptions are rectified quickly.
- The teaching of reading is particularly good. As a consequence, pupils develop a keen desire to engage in reading activities, as seen in the large number of pupils who choose to read at lunchtime and use the well-stocked, inviting library and attractive space for reading outdoors.
- Teaching ensures that pupils learn all that they should in terms of the national curriculum programmes of study for English reading, English writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- Teachers regularly discuss the progress that individuals and groups of pupils are

making in English and mathematics. Any pupils who are falling behind are identified and extra help is arranged quickly.

- Inspectors looked at written work in pupils' English, mathematics and topic books in all classes. They found that good teaching is enabling most pupils to make good progress from their starting points.
- Inspectors also found that the most able pupils are not consistently challenged and stretched sufficiently across the full range of subjects.
- Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to write at length to develop their ideas or to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve a wide range of problems.
- The contribution of teaching assistants in promoting good learning is widely variable. Some support learning expertly; others lack the necessary knowledge and skills to lead learning effectively.
- The school's systems for assessing how well pupils are learning and to track their progress over time have been revised this year. The new approach has not been in place for long enough to ensure that it is entirely reliable.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' well-being is seen by all staff as equally important to their academic performance.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They take pride in their own achievements and other pupils' accomplishments.
- They participate in discussions and debate willingly and show respect for other people's points of view. This is supported well through the curriculum, with ample opportunities for them to express their ideas and feelings.
- Attendance for all pupils is average and it is improving, especially for disadvantaged pupils, some of whom in the past have not attended as well as others. The headteacher will not authorise absence for holidays during term time. Parents are quickly alerted when their children's attendance begins to falter.
- Pupils are confident learners who are keen to improve and develop their learning.
- Pupils have a huge say in what they would like to learn. They have developed a list of 25 experiences they would like to achieve during their time at Whitefriars. 'Sleeping under the stars' is one of them. Supervised camping for Year 5 was observed by inspectors. Pupils' immense enjoyment and appreciation of the camping experience and outdoor activities were tangible.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct is impressive in all respects. This is established excellently in the early

years and continues throughout the school. Pupils move around the building sensibly with due care and attention to safety. They patiently wait and take turns.

- Almost all of the 111 parents responding to Parent View (99%) confirmed that pupils are well behaved, matching the results of the school's independent survey. Exclusion is rarely used.
- Pupils feel safe and they are safe. They are taught how to keep themselves safe out in the community as well as at school. The police and other services contribute to their advanced understanding.
- Knowing that many spend time at home using devices and technologies, promotion of e-safety is high on the agenda and pupils demonstrate secure knowledge of how to stay safe online. Parents too are kept informed of the dangers and inappropriate use of the internet and mobile applications (apps).
- The school council is actively involved in reviewing the behaviour policy of the school, including anti-bullying, and the pupil advocates have also had a positive impact on pupil behaviour at playtimes.
- The school has effective procedures in place for dealing with bullying, including homophobic bullying, cyber-bullying and racist incidents. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They know what to do and whom to go to seek help if they are anxious or have any concerns.
- Pupils develop as thoughtful, considerate young people who know right from wrong and have the capacity to make good choices. Their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them well for their future lives as British citizens.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Most pupils are currently making good progress from their starting points in all subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress has recovered from last year. Evidence seen of work in pupils' books showed little variation in their performance from other pupils.
- The most able pupils, including those who are also disadvantaged, are making good progress in English and mathematics. The work set for them in other subjects is not demanding enough to stretch them sufficiently.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress. Those whose progress is more limited derives from significant additional factors, such as low attendance due to medical appointments and needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language acquire spoken and written English language quickly and make similar progress to other pupils.
- Pupils read frequently at home and at school. They enjoy reading activities. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics to break words down into separate sounds to read them and to blend sounds together to write words. They have good knowledge of the high-frequency words that occur most often in written material.
- Pupils develop a sound understanding of English spelling, punctuation and grammar but have too few opportunities to practise using these skills in longer pieces of writing.

- Pupils' spoken English is strikingly clear and articulate when they explain their ideas and talk about their learning.
- Typically, pupils make good progress in mathematical calculation and methods. They are less confident in applying their knowledge of mathematics to solve problems because they do not have enough practice.
- The 2016 national test results in key stage 2 were not typical, or indeed expected by the school. Not enough pupils had made sufficient progress in reading and mathematics from when they started in Year 3.
- The attainment for most Year 6 pupils in reading and mathematics, and particularly disadvantaged pupils, was below average. Too few pupils whose prior attainment was above average in key stage 1 achieved a high standard in the tests.
- Leaders underestimated the demands of the new 2016 tests and teachers had not prepared pupils well enough to be successful. Significant adjustments in teaching are being made this year to address this.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Effective teaching ensures that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in readiness for learning in Year 1 has been consistently above the national average for three years.
- A good range of indoor and outdoor play opportunities stimulate children's excitement in learning. Special visits and input from visitors such as paramedics further extend their experiences and understanding of the world.
- The environment strongly encourages children to do as much as possible for themselves. Children sort out their belongings unassisted in the morning, they self-select their healthy snacks and drinks and they clear away toys and equipment tidily.
- Children enjoy working through the 'challenges' that teachers set for them. They check in with adults to confirm when they have completed them all and they are proud when they have achieved them. There are big incentives for children to complete the challenges, such as treats from the 'goody box' and the children respond positively to this.
- Staff have high expectations for children to behave well and they do so, beautifully. Behaviour is managed expertly with calmness, explanation, persuasion and just the right amount of insistence.
- Children's early reading and writing skills develop well. The teaching of phonics is systematic and effective. Every child spends quality time reading with an adult daily. Children engage in reading activities readily.
- The pupil premium used to support disadvantaged children makes a difference to them. They learn as well as the rest, benefiting, for example, from extra help to develop their speech, language and communication skills.
- Parents who have children with special educational needs and/or disabilities confirmed that the school supports their children very well to make 'excellent progress'. Signing is used expertly and extensively to support deaf children so that they learn as much as



others and are fully included. Good play and learning opportunities help children who speak English as an additional language to develop a good grasp of the English language.

- Leadership in the early years is effective. Evaluation of what is working well and what could be even better is accurate.
- The leader is developing a new approach to assessment to evidence the stage of development that children have reached using technology. This is work in progress and not fully embedded. Evidence gathered to evaluate children's attainment on entry is not routinely double-checked for accuracy.
- Good relationships exist between staff and parents. Inspectors observed parents approaching staff confidently and appropriately to talk about concerns and achievements or to share relevant information about their children. The early years welfare requirements are met fully.
- While children have a wide range of activities to choose from, some of the whole-class teaching requires them to sit and listen for too long to keep their attention.
- Some teaching assistants use their initiative and expertly pick up when a child needs extra help or a gentle reminder; others are less vigilant and effective.
- The provision to promote children's development in expressive arts and design, especially in exploring materials, tools, techniques and colour, design and texture, is not catered for as well as in other areas of learning.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 141314   |
| Local authority         | Norfolk  |
| Inspection number       | 10031406 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school                      | Primary  |
| School category                     | Academy converter  |
| Age range of pupils                 | 4 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                    | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 417  |
| Appropriate authority               | The trust board  |
| Chair                               | Jillian Hemmings   |
| Headteacher                         | Mathew Tuckwood  |
| Telephone number                    | 01553 761001   |
| Website                             | <a href="http://www.whitefriars.norfolk.sch.uk">www.whitefriars.norfolk.sch.uk</a>       |
| Email address                       | <a href="mailto:office@whitefriars.norfolk.sch.uk">office@whitefriars.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 Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This school is larger than most primary schools. The number of pupils on roll has increased by a quarter since the previous inspection.
- The school converted to academy status in September 2014. It is a member of a multi-academy trust, namely, the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The school meets the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language are above

average.

## Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector (HMCI) has the discretionary power to inspect any school in England under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The school’s overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding in its previous inspection in 2011 and, as such, it would normally be exempt from regular inspection.
- A decline in standards in 2016 prompted a one-day section 8 inspection by one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) and an Ofsted Inspector, to evaluate the progress and attainment of current pupils. The HMI converted the inspection to a full section 5 inspection during the first day. The following day, two Ofsted Inspectors joined the original team to complete the inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in most classes, sometimes jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to inspectors and talked about their books.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ written work in English, mathematics and other subjects in all classes. The school provided information about the progress that pupils are making currently. Published information about pupils’ attainment and progress in relation to all pupils nationally was considered.
- Pupils were observed during morning and lunchtime breaks. Inspectors spoke to pupils while they worked in class and more formally in groups. They also took into account their responses to school questionnaires.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the inclusion team, the chair of the governing body, members of the trust board, the academies group executive principal (West), teachers new to the profession and staff responsible for administration.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school’s documentation, including policies and record-keeping for safeguarding. The single central record of statutory suitability vetting carried out on all staff, volunteers and governors was checked.
- The school’s information about how well it is performing and its plans for future improvements were evaluated. Minutes of the governing body’s meetings were examined.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and took into account 111 responses to Parent View and school surveys.

## Inspection team

|                               |                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Linda Killman, lead inspector | Her Majesty’s Inspector |
| Paul Copping                  | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Olive Millington              | Ofsted Inspector        |
| Henry Weir                    | Ofsted Inspector        |

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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