

Alderman Jacobs School

Drybread Road, Whittlesey, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE7 1XJ

Inspection dates

13–14 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Under the headteacher's strong leadership, leaders at all levels have secured rapid school improvement in both the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils are now making good progress across the school. Weaknesses seen in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2016 have been tackled well by leaders.
- Leaders make good use of information about pupils' progress to see where additional support is needed. Pupils who are in danger of falling behind are helped to catch up quickly.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are given well-targeted support that helps them to make good progress.
- The governing body has played a key part in school improvement over the last two years. Governors know the school well and provide good challenge to other leaders when necessary.
- In the early years, children make good progress. This is because teachers know the children very well and plan challenging and enjoyable work. Indoor provision is especially strong, but staff do not make as effective use of the outdoor area.
- In key stages 1 and 2, good teaching helps pupils to acquire new skills quickly, especially in English and mathematics.
- Teachers usually plan work that provides good challenge for different ability groups, although they do not always move on the learning of the most able quickly enough in mathematics.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school and develop positive attitudes towards learning. They feel safe and have great confidence in the ability of staff to sort out problems quickly.
- Staff place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. However, not all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility to look out for the potential radicalisation of pupils.
- There is a good partnership between home and school. Most parents are pleased with the work of the school and with recent improvements.
- There is a rich and varied curriculum that helps to make learning fun. Pupils develop good skills in subjects such as art and music.
- In history and geography, pupils' work is more variable in quality because the curriculum does not focus well enough on subject-specific skills and knowledge.
- The happy atmosphere in school reflects the way that leaders value and respect all members of the community.
- Work in and out of lessons makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Key values such as tolerance and respect are strongly promoted and are reflected in all aspects of the school's work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve challenge for the most able in mathematics by ensuring that teachers respond quickly enough when pupils have grasped a concept and are ready to have their learning moved on.
- Improve the quality of pupils' work in geography and history by ensuring that topics are studied in sufficient detail to enable pupils to develop the appropriate skills in these subjects.
- Improve outdoor provision and learning in the early years so that it is of the same high quality as indoors.
- Ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities to look out for the potential radicalisation of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is well led and managed. Under the strong guidance of the headteacher, leaders at all levels responded decisively after the previous inspection to tackle the weaknesses identified and to ensure that outcomes for pupils improved.
- Together, the headteacher and senior leadership team have established a culture where pupils are flourishing both socially and academically, and staff work together well to achieve this.
- Due to a legacy of underachievement, especially in key stage 2, it has taken longer than expected for these improvements to be seen in test results at the end of Year 6. Nonetheless, pupils' progress is now good, reflecting the positive effect of initiatives implemented over the last two years.
- Leaders have focused successfully on improving teaching. Leaders set teachers sharp targets for improvement through performance management and their regular monitoring of teaching. Verbal feedback to teachers is generally sharp and delivers clear guidance, although, just occasionally, less experienced leaders are too positive in their comments about what needs improving.
- Leaders have provided useful training for staff in areas such as phonics and the teaching of reading. This has been closely tailored to the needs of the school and has secured rapid improvement in areas that have previously been weaker.
- The headteacher and governing body have ensured that responsibility for securing improvement is shared much more widely among leaders than at the time of the previous inspection. Senior and middle leaders work well with the headteacher. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are doing the right things to improve provision in their areas of focus further. Leaders make good use of external consultants and their links with other local schools to validate school self-evaluation and to support school improvement.
- Leaders, including subject leaders in English and mathematics, have improved their use of information on pupils' progress since the previous inspection. This means that they are able to respond much more quickly than in the past to dips in progress as soon as they arise. They have taken effective action in the current year to improve pupils' attainment in reading, after a dip in results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2016. Their strategies to do this have been well considered and have helped to improve both teaching and pupils' attitudes towards reading.
- The school spends the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils well. Historically, these pupils have made slower progress than others in the school or nationally. This is no longer the case. Leaders have implemented a tailored programme of interventions for eligible pupils that are having a positive effect on the academic and social development of the disadvantaged, including the most able.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched well by a good number of clubs and visits. Over the last two years, leaders have improved the curriculum, especially in English. This has helped to raise pupils' attainment. For example, leaders have prioritised promoting a love a reading, and there has been a strong focus on giving

pupils frequent opportunities to write when studying history or geography topics. However, as a result of this, some work in history and geography lacks a focus on the skills, knowledge and understanding specific to those subjects, because it concentrates too much on improving literacy skills.

- Pupils' creativity is promoted well through the art and music curriculum. Sport and physical education are also given a high priority. The physical education and sports premium has made a positive difference to pupils' health and well-being. Pupils said that they like being able to try out new sports, such as golf and hockey. Leaders ensure that the benefits of the funding will continue in the future by using sports coaches to improve the skills of class teachers.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong and effective focus on supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show good concern for the needs of others by, for example, becoming school councillors or play leaders. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about British values and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They constantly show values such as tolerance and respect in their everyday interactions with each other and with adults.
- Parents are very positive about the school and most would recommend it to others. Typical comments from parents included, 'The teachers do a great job and the school is very well run', and 'My child loves going to school because she feels safe and challenged.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective and has been instrumental in recent school improvement. Governors have improved their skills since the previous inspection. They responded positively to an external review of their work and greatly strengthened their involvement in checking school effectiveness. Consequently, they have a clear understanding of how well the school is performing in comparison to other schools both locally and nationally and what still needs to be improved.
- Governors have a clear picture of where teaching is stronger or weaker and of how it is being strengthened. They check that systems to manage staff performance are properly implemented and that teachers' pay rewards good teaching.
- Governors check carefully the use of specific funding for special educational needs. They ensure that it is being used successfully to help to support these pupils to make good progress. Governors also monitor thoroughly the impact of the pupil premium so that they can be confident that it is helping to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has robust safeguarding procedures. Staff are vigilant in looking for and tackling any potential safeguarding issues. They keep a watchful eye on vulnerable pupils and work closely with the school's safeguarding team if they have even minor concerns.

- Regular and appropriate training for staff is undertaken and information is updated. This covers all aspects of safeguarding. However, despite this extensive training, a small number of staff do not have a strong enough awareness of their responsibilities to identify and tackle radicalisation through the 'Prevent' duty programme.
- Strong relationships are in place with a wide range of external agencies as well as with parents to ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection and is now good across the school.
- Pupils develop positive attitudes towards learning because relationships with their teachers are strong. Teachers constantly reinforce the message that their class should work without fear of failure. Consequently, pupils willingly try new things because they know that, if they go wrong, their teacher will help them.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in English. They use questioning well to move learning on and to assess what pupils already know. They plan work that provides a good level of challenge most of the time to different ability groups, including the most able. However, in mathematics, teachers sometimes do not move on the learning of the most able quickly enough when they have finished a piece of work or have already grasped a concept.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and how they should behave. They make learning interesting through the good use of resources, such as modern technology, and by linking subjects together.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils make better progress in phonics than at the time of the last inspection as a result of thorough training for teachers and teaching assistants and the effective use of additional support to help pupils, especially the disadvantaged, who are in danger of falling behind.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils, especially when working with those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are well informed most of the time, and sensitively help pupils to improve their skills and knowledge.
- Parents and pupils are very pleased with the quality of teaching in the school. Pupils said that they enjoy their homework tasks, especially when they are encouraged to find things out for themselves. They also enjoy opportunities to read with their parents and to have access to an online mathematics program to support their learning at home.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop good levels of confidence and self-worth. They are proud of their school and their work. They are kind and caring and take responsibility well. The school council gives pupils a strong voice in school life.

- Pupils have high aspirations for their own achievement. They enjoy the 'Work Weeks' when they learn about different careers, such as being scientists, engineers or nurses. As one said, 'We know that we can achieve anything if we work hard.'
- Pupils feel safe in school. They said that there is occasional bullying but it is tackled well by staff. They know whom to turn to if they have a concern, and one commented, 'There is always someone to talk to if we are worried.' Older pupils are being prepared well for the move to secondary school.
- Activities in lessons help pupils to develop a clear understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils explained clearly how websites can be blocked and they understand the potential pitfalls of using social media.
- Pupils show good self-control at playtimes and lunchtimes. There is a happy atmosphere as pupils play together. However, in hot weather, pupils have a limited understanding of the need to avoid getting sunburnt. The school agrees that it does not do enough to encourage the wearing of hats on sunny days.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and feel that behaviour is typically good. The vast majority of parents and staff agree. School records show that incidents of poor behaviour in the classrooms are extremely rare but, when they do occur, they are dealt with quickly.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the school day. They are polite and courteous to each other and to visitors. In class, they behave sensibly and work hard. They concentrate well most of the time, although they sometimes become inattentive and call out, especially when over-excited about their work.
- Pupils are very clear about the school rules and they enjoy 'Going for Green' so that they can be rewarded for good behaviour. They understand clearly the need to behave well in lessons and feel that teachers apply the school's behaviour policy fairly.
- Attendance is broadly average. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time ready to learn. Leaders are active in tackling poor attendance. They have worked closely with outside agencies and families to improve the attendance of the small number of mainly disadvantaged pupils who are more persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress has improved since the previous inspection and is now good across the school. Although the school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on academic performance results over the last three years, this reflects the legacy of underachievement identified at the time of the last inspection, rather than weaknesses in current provision.
- Pupils' attainment is improving quickly across the school. In both the current Year 2 and Year 6, the proportion of pupils working at or above the expected levels for their age is already higher than reached in end-of-year assessments for the same year groups in 2016.

- Leaders have dealt well with the slow progress made by pupils in reading in 2016 in key stage 2 and in writing in key stage 1. Their current focus on making reading more enjoyable through reading challenges, improved teaching, a new library and improved resources is proving effective. Both girls and boys read confidently. The most able express clear preferences for what sort of books they especially enjoy. They can talk about favourite authors.
- Less-able younger pupils have a good knowledge of phonics and are able to use this knowledge when trying to sound out unknown words. Pupils' attainment in the national phonics screening checks at the end of Year 1 has been rising, and the proportion reaching the expected standard in 2016 was broadly average.
- Across the school, pupils are fluent writers. By Year 6, most use a joined style that helps them to get their thoughts onto paper easily and supports their good spelling. They enjoy being able to write in a variety of styles in different subjects, and this strongly supports their good current progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points because of the support that they receive. Frequent checks on their progress highlight any gaps in their learning and additional support is arranged where needed.
- Leaders have improved the progress of disadvantaged pupils over the last year, especially in phonics in key stage 1, and they are now making the same good progress as others in the school. This is due to strong leadership of provision and well-monitored and tailored support both in and out of lessons.
- The most able pupils, including the disadvantaged, make good progress most of the time. The school provides good opportunities for them to extend their learning, both in lessons and in activities outside the classroom. Just occasionally, their progress slows when teaching does not move their learning on quickly enough in mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects beyond English and mathematics. Pupils' artwork, for example, shows a good level of skill, and their work in design and technology is of high quality. In music, pupils sing tunefully and an increasing number are beginning to play musical instruments.
- Pupils produce some good-quality work in history and geography. However, in some classes, activities do not do enough to help pupils to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding specific to those subjects required by the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has worked successfully to improve provision since the previous inspection. Children's attainment by the end of the Reception year has been rising over the last three years and was slightly above average in 2016. This reflects good progress from children's varied starting points and they are now being prepared well for life in Year 1.
- Children make good progress because they are taught well. Teachers plan many interesting activities that provide good levels of challenge most of the time, including for the most able and for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The indoor environment is especially stimulating and inviting. Teachers link

subjects together to make learning purposeful and to motivate children. For example, as part of their topic on mini-beasts, children wrote descriptions, built bug dens, used magnifying glasses, made models and painted pictures.

- Adults make good use of questioning to challenge children to think for themselves but, just occasionally, they do not move learning on quickly enough when children have already grasped a concept or have stayed on the same activity for too long.
- There is a well-resourced outdoor area but it is not always used effectively to promote good learning. There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop skills in the different areas of learning when working outside. On occasions, there are too few staff working outside to support the children in their learning. Leaders know that this is the most important area for development within the early years provision.
- Adults focus particularly well on supporting children's personal, social and emotional development. The warm and welcoming relationships and consistently applied routines that are evident throughout the setting help children to settle quickly. Children behave well because they become absorbed in activities that motivate them to want to learn. Children are encouraged to develop their skills of independence, and they sustain their concentration well for their age. They learn to share and take turns. They understand how to stay safe by, for example, washing their hands before eating, although few wear hats when working outside on a sunny day.
- The early years leader has greatly sharpened the use of assessment information since the previous inspection. Children's progress over the year is checked frequently and staff respond quickly if they identify any potential underachievement. The progress of disadvantaged children is monitored closely and they are now making the same good progress as the others.
- Links with parents are strong and they are pleased with how well their children settle into the Reception classes. As one commented, 'The children are getting a great start to school life.' Parents are particularly positive about the online assessment system that is available to them. Several parents mentioned how helpful they find it.

School details

Unique reference number	136653
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10031385

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

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	560
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Laura Holland
Headteacher	Cathy Carlisle
Telephone number	01733 202403
Website	www.aldermanjacobs.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	head@aldermanjacobs.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 June 2015

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 is a larger-than-average-sized primary school with 21 classes. Children in the early years are taught in three Reception classes.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average.

- The school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons, many of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or other members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspectors made some short visits to observe learning at other times.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, an external consultant and members of the governing body and academy trust.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 77 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also talked with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at their work and school documents, including: the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress; planning and monitoring documents; the school development plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance; safeguarding information; and health and safety documentation.
- The inspectors analysed responses to inspection questionnaires from 50 members of staff and 23 pupils.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Allison	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqueline Bell-Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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