

Ryhall CofE Academy

Church Street, Ryhall, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 4HR

Inspection dates

19–20 September 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders' plans for improvement provide a clear direction for the school. They are sharply focused to address the recent expansion of the school.
- The headteacher provides inspiring leadership to ensure that the school is good. She and her staff work well together for the benefit of all pupils. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Governors are committed to the school. They visit regularly to check that improvements are effective in providing pupils with a good standard of education.
- Teachers plan exciting lessons that pupils find interesting. The curriculum is enriched by a wealth of stimulating activities. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic learners who are eager to attend school.
- Work in pupils' books show that most, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in a range of subjects.
- Children make a good start in the Reception class. High-quality care and provision ensures that they settle in well and become confident learners.
- Staff work well as a team. They plan lessons together and work hard to provide quality learning experiences for pupils.
- The school's curriculum ensures that pupils' personal development and welfare is well considered. Pupils are articulate and thoughtful to the needs of others.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They follow instructions quickly and are polite and respectful. The majority listen carefully both to teachers and to teaching assistants and are eager to do well.
- Parents value highly the nurturing ethos of the school.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is below average.
- Some pupils, including the most able, are not challenged as soon as they could be in lessons. This slows their progress.
- Middle leaders are not fully contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to meet the growing needs of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning of phonics so that more pupils achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Ensure that teachers give pupils appropriately challenging work right from the start of their lessons so that it stretches and deepens their learning, to further accelerate their progress in all subjects.
- Further develop capacity in middle leaders so that they more effectively support the headteacher in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders' plans to improve the school are precise. They correctly identify the priorities and the actions needed to achieve success. As a result, the headteacher and governors have coped well with the expansion of the school and are driving improvements forwards and embedding good practice.
- The headteacher provides an inspirational model of leadership for all staff. Parents and pupils recognise the significant change in culture she has brought about in the school. She is ably supported by her staff, the governing body and the school improvement officer for the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. Their shared vision, drive and determination have been vital to the improvements made over time and the subsequent expansion of the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is a strength of the school. It is well supported by a curriculum that engages and enthuses pupils. For example, pupils in Year 4 debated the issue of conservation as opposed to the need to build more modern affordable homes. They wrote highly effective letters to the company who were building the new homes, expressing their concern about the impact on the environment. In addition, older pupils have learned about the importance of good mental health and positive attitudes to learning. They say they are encouraged to learn from their mistakes and consider their 'bounce back ability'.
- The school offers a stimulating curriculum that motivates pupils and contributes to their outstanding personal development. Leaders are committed to improving English and mathematics skills through a curriculum that gives pupils many opportunities to show initiative and creativity. Consequently, the curriculum very successfully promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Through their school council, eco warriors and junior police cadet officer roles, they gain an understanding of democracy. In addition, collective worship and lessons regularly focus on school values, such as 'respect' and 'compassion', as well as what it is like to be a citizen in the wider community. This focus ensures that pupils learn about the importance of the rule of law and the importance of treating people with respect.
- Leaders and governors effectively use the pupil premium funding and the funding for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They make sure that the small number of these pupils achieve well. The design of the curriculum and the use of targeted additional support ensure that throughout the school the vast majority of these pupils make good progress.
- Good use is made of the primary school physical education and sport premium funding to provide specialist teaching and training for staff. The school also provides extensive after-school clubs, such as gymnastics, basketball and dance. As a result, pupils' physical development and understanding of the importance of keeping fit to stay healthy are good.
- School leaders have created a strong, nurturing culture and ethos in the school. Staff work well together and have remained determined to do the best for pupils throughout

the recent changes to the school. Leaders have acted promptly to appoint new staff to strengthen teaching and learning and further develop leadership to meet the needs of this growing school.

- In the past, middle leaders have not fully contributed to the evaluation of teaching and learning. School leaders have accurately identified that this is an area for development in order to ensure that, as the school grows, leaders at all levels are held to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders have not rigorously monitored the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics so that more pupils, particularly low-ability pupils, attain the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the school and are committed to its continuing improvement. They have responded commendably to the need to restructure the school to accommodate the high number of pupils joining in recent months. Their support has enabled staff to better manage transition for these pupils. As a result, these pupils are well settled and eager to learn.
- Governors understand their roles and responsibilities for securing school improvement. They visit the school frequently to meet with leaders to discuss the provision for pupils and make checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They use the school's performance information well to ask questions of school leaders and hold them to account.
- The governing body checks on how the use of additional funds, such as the pupil premium and sport premium funding, are used to impact on standards. They receive regular reports from the headteacher on the outcomes for different groups of pupils. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs keeps a close check on the progress of additional support and the impact of the additional income for this group of pupils. As a result, vulnerable pupils achieve well at school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and other school staff know pupils well and this contributes to the strong culture of care. The vast majority of parents consider their children are safe and that staff look after them well at school.
- Leaders provide a safe environment for pupils and ensure that policies and procedures for safeguarding are well implemented. Staff undertake regular training and are vigilant to the risks of extremist views. They know what to do if they have a concern about a child. Leaders keep precise records which show effective work with external agencies.
- The culture of safeguarding within the school is evident in the way pupils feel safe. Pupils trust adults in the school and say they know who to talk to if they are worried. Pupils told inspectors how the school ensures that they are safe at school, including how to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They plan exciting lessons that inspire and motivate pupils. Relationships with pupils are strong and pupils are enthusiastic learners. As a result, the majority of pupils make good progress in their work across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors' observations of learning, examination of pupils' books and the current school assessment information show that teaching is typically good. Where teaching is less strong, the headteacher provides effective support and guidance.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support. Teachers have termly meetings with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss pupils' individual learning plans. Subsequently, teachers carefully plan targeted interventions to support these pupils. As a result, this group of pupils make good progress.
- Teachers often extend pupils' learning through the use of well-considered questions. Teachers' feedback encourages pupils to reflect on how they could improve their work further and deepens their understanding.
- Pupils self-evaluate the quality of their work. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that, over time, this is helping to reinforce learning and encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes. One Year 3 pupil told an inspector he 'loves a good challenge!' and went on to write, 'in the blink of an eye, the rain came down as fast as Mo Farah'. This was in response to the challenge from his teacher to improve the fronted adverbial in his sentence.
- Teachers provide lessons that allow pupils to practise their English and mathematical skills across different subjects. Pupils' topic work in subjects such as history and science often reinforces pupils' learning in writing and data handling, for example. This ensures that pupils' learning is consolidated over time. Year 1 pupils were observed taking part in a 'listening walk'. They used their scientific skills to explore the variety of sounds they could hear and identify the sources. The teacher and teaching assistant then skilfully encouraged pupils to record their findings using a variety of adjectives.
- Teachers pay particular attention to the development of key skills, such as handwriting, spelling and grammar, in pupils' writing. Pupils write for a range of purposes, sometimes over extended periods, and this helps to build their resilience as writers. Over time, pupils' writing shows improvements in the quality, presentation and maturity of content. Consequently, it becomes increasingly engaging for people to read.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills. When solving mathematical problems, pupils are expected to explain what they have done and why. This improves their reasoning skills. In Year 5, pupils enthusiastically solved problems involving square numbers through their topic of ancient Greeks. They were challenged to explain their thinking to each other while using Greek numbers.
- Teachers model reading well to pupils and use quality texts to plan interesting work in English and across the curriculum. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their enjoyment

of reading and value the spaces teachers provide for them to 'relax with a book'.

- Inspectors heard pupils reading fluently and with expression. Pupils value reading and are encouraged to read for different purposes. Year 6 pupils told me that they also enjoy drama based on stories and excitedly told me how they sometimes get opportunities to act them out to the rest of the school. Furthermore, inspectors observed pupils in Year 2 using a book about the history of London to check facts for their newspaper writing about the Great Fire of London.
- Teachers teach pupils to use their developing phonics knowledge to read new or unfamiliar words. This develops their confidence and enhances their ability to read for pleasure. However, not enough pupils, particularly low-ability pupils, are attaining the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Teachers use skilful questioning and challenging tasks to extend and deepen pupils' learning. However, teachers do not consistently provide pupils with access to challenging work at the earliest possible opportunity in lessons. This slows their progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. The school has a warm, nurturing and friendly atmosphere where pupils enjoy learning.
- The vast majority of parents value highly the care and attention staff give to developing pupils as individuals. One parent commented, 'the emphasis on caring, equality and respect all help to make the look and feel of the school amazing'. Another parent stated that, as a result of the teaching at Ryhall, her children had 'progressed unrecognisably in their confidence and self-esteem'.
- Pupils are articulate and self-assured. They are confident and have excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils who inspectors spoke with said that they like learning through interesting topics and appreciate having a challenge because 'it makes our brains grow bigger. Challenges make us awesome learners.'
- Pupils recognise that they are well cared for. They are taught how to stay safe and feel safe in school. They learn about risks, such as using social media and stranger danger. Unkindness and bullying are rare. Pupils know about the different types of unkind behaviour and are confident that adults deal with any poor behaviour quickly and effectively. Pupils say they feel empowered to 'talk through any disagreements' through support from staff, such as in the 'Can we talk?' club.
- Leaders effectively promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils were able to explain to inspectors how to stay healthy by eating well and exercising regularly. They value highly the range of sporting clubs and activities provided by the school. Pupils are also aware of spaces where they can relax and reflect, such as the 'reflection room', classroom reading corners and the outdoor reading area.
- Pupils socialise well and are aspirational to help others and make their school and local area better. For example, they are encouraged to take on elected positions of

responsibility, such as for the school council, eco warriors and junior police cadet school officers. The collective school focus to ensure that every child can be successful in 'Looking back with pride and moving forward with confidence' is evident in the school's curriculum and nurturing ethos.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff model high expectations of behaviour well. As a result, pupils are courteous to their peers and to adults. They cooperate well to work and play happily together.
- Pupils take pride in their school and behave well in lessons. Their conduct is consistently good at most times of the school day. The majority of pupils respond quickly and appropriately to adults' instructions.
- Pupils are articulate and speak highly of the improvements in behaviour in school. They feel able to express their opinions and trust the adults in school, who they say support them well.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above the national average, with pupils arriving punctually and ready for the day ahead.
- Leaders' actions to secure effective transition for children new to the school has ensured that pupils are well integrated and settled quickly into good routines. They understand and respond to the high expectations for behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Work in pupils' books shows that the large majority of pupils are making good progress in relation to their starting points, regardless of ability or background. Over time, pupils' knowledge and skills are improving and their understanding is deepening. This is true across a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers check their assessments of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics with other schools in the local area and within their trust. Senior leaders ensure that systems are robust and, because of this, they know that teachers' assessments are accurate.
- At the end of 2016, the proportion of children in the Reception class reaching age-related expectations was greater than that found nationally. School information for current children shows that standards have remained high and have improved further in 2017.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their progress is tracked carefully and teachers tailor additional support specifically to meet their individual needs. Over time, the difference between the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils diminishes.
- In key stage 2, pupils' progress was broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. A higher proportion of pupils attained at the higher standards than in the previous year.
- In 2016, key stage 1 pupils' attainment was well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. However, key stage 1 outcomes declined in 2017.

Leaders have acted promptly to better support these pupils in their learning. As a result, inspectors' scrutiny of these pupils' workbooks and of their learning currently in Year 3 shows that they are making good progress.

- Despite leaders' improvements to the quality of teaching and learning in reading, this did not impact on Year 1 phonics outcomes, which were below those expected nationally.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge appropriate for their age. From this point, they make good progress and the majority leave Reception with a good level of development. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders have created a stimulating and attractive environment to support children's learning. The indoor and outdoor classrooms encourage children to be curious and take an active interest in their learning. This means that children focus well on tasks they have been asked to do and are keen to explore their environment. Children take responsibility for their own learning in purposeful play. Consequently, they build on skills and knowledge taught to them by their teacher and teaching assistant.
- Relationships between adults and children are good. Children behave well and receive a high quality of care. They work and play happily together. They are proud of their work and are confident to talk to others about what they are learning. For example, one child proudly showed inspectors how he had worked with his friends to create a dam to stop water flowing down a path.
- Effective training and support brokered by the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust has improved provision and the quality of teaching is good. The teacher and teaching assistant work very well together. They assess the children's learning and plan lessons that meet children's needs well. This enables children to make good progress.
- Parental involvement is strong. Through an online assessment programme, parents can access information about how well their child is doing in school. The early years leader also arranges information events to better inform parents about their child's learning, such as in phonics. As a result, children are happy, confident learners and parents speak positively about the early years.
- The teaching assistant is deployed well. She models good language skills. She uses skilful questioning to extend and deepen children's thinking as they play, which results in children making good gains in their understanding.
- The number of disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is too small to report on without the risk of identifying them.

School details

Unique reference number	141234
Local authority	Rutland
Inspection number	10035951

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	173
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Amanda Rogers
Headteacher	Katy Walker
Telephone number	01780 762447
Website	www.ryhallceacademy.co.uk
Email address	head@ryhall.rutland.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.
- In October 2014, Ryhall Church of England Primary opened as an academy as part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.
- Ryhall Church of England Academy is smaller than most primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The percentage of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, including two joint observations with the headteacher. They observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, leader of the early years, middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a school improvement officer for the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 53 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; a review of the school's performance by the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils; and minutes from a number of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Vondra Mays

Ofsted Inspector

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