

# Dereham, Toftwood Community Junior School

38 Westfield Road, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1JB

## Inspection dates

20–21 September 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, leaders, including governors, have not done enough to improve weaknesses in teaching and in leadership and management. Consequently, overall standards have declined.
- Weak monitoring and assessment procedures have limited leaders' ability to ensure that pupils progress well enough.
- Leaders have not managed the performance of teachers effectively. Poor-quality teaching has remained unchallenged.
- Until recently, governors have not challenged school leaders to make improvements.
- Teaching varies widely. There are inconsistencies in planning and assessment, and in the feedback given to pupils to help them improve their work.
- The pupil premium is not used effectively. Differences in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils have widened.
- Money has not been spent wisely to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make sufficient progress.
- Not enough of the school's most able pupils exceed expectations because they are not given sufficiently challenging work to do.
- New procedures to raise achievement are not firmly established. Improvement plans lack measurable targets to hold leaders accountable for making improvements.
- Pupils have only a limited range of books to promote their reading.
- Changes made to the curriculum to stimulate and motivate pupils to learn are new and not fully established.

### The school has the following strengths

- A recent federation with an outstanding infant school is adding significantly to the school's capacity to improve. New leaders, including governors, are demonstrating that they know what to do to raise achievement.
- Pupils attend regularly and behave well. They enjoy school and told inspectors that it is a safe, friendly place to be.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective.

## Full report

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

- Gain much greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - eradicating weak teaching
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan learning suited to pupils' different abilities
  - providing much more challenging work for the most able pupils
  - providing pupils with good-quality feedback to help them improve their work.
- Raise achievement throughout the school by:
  - raising expectations of what all pupils are capable of attaining
  - ensuring that newly introduced assessment procedures become firmly established and enable teachers to identify early those at risk of underachieving
  - monitoring routinely the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on pupils' progress
  - ensuring that staff know the barriers to learning experienced by disadvantaged pupils and the actions needed to ensure that these pupils achieve as well as others
  - broadening pupils' choice of reading books and monitoring the range of different books they read.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - implementing robust procedures to manage the performance of staff and taking prompt action if the quality of teaching falls below the standards expected by school leaders
  - ensuring that new procedures to monitor systematically the school's work become firmly embedded and lead directly to rapid improvements
  - adding measurable targets to the school's improvement plans to hold all leaders accountable for making improvements
  - ensuring that spending of the pupil premium leads to urgent and sustainable improvements in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
  - ensuring that additional resources to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are targeted much more effectively
  - ensuring that the new curriculum becomes firmly established and is enriched with a wide range of activities that stimulate and motivate pupils to learn
  - ensuring that the federation's recently formed governing body provides school leaders with both the support and challenge needed to make widespread improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Following the last inspection, school leaders did not do enough to make the much-needed improvements. The causes of further underachievement, clearly evident this year in key stage 2 results, were not dealt with effectively.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation have been ineffective. Records of pupils' progress and behaviour have not been fully maintained. Leaders have not routinely monitored the performance of teachers, so ineffective teaching has gone unchallenged. Consequently, key groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able, have all underachieved.
- The pupil premium has been spent on a range of initiatives, but this has not led to any significant improvement. Leaders, including governors, have not checked the full impact of their spending plans, so disadvantaged pupils have continued to underachieve. Spending plans are currently being reviewed to enable leaders to target funding more appropriately.
- Until recently, the impact of money allocated to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has not been monitored closely. Leaders have not routinely checked that these pupils receive the help they need to make sufficient progress.
- The physical education and sport premium is used effectively. Membership of the local partnership of schools enables pupils to participate in a wide range of sporting activities and competitions. Teachers have gained from working alongside external sports coaches to give them the competence and confidence to teach new activities.
- Leaders have not evaluated the impact of the school's topic-based curriculum to ensure that it enables pupils to attain what they are capable of achieving, and meets their different needs and interests. Pupils have not spent enough time learning in some foundation subjects, such as art, and have only recently started weekly science lessons.
- In May 2017, the governing body instigated an external review of the school's performance. At this point, at the request of governors, an effective leader from the neighbouring outstanding infant school took over the leadership of the school in the absence of the previous headteacher. Since September 2017, the two schools have operated as a federation, led by a substantive executive headteacher. She shares her time equally between both schools, supported by leadership teams in each school.
- These significant changes have rescued the school from further decline. The executive headteacher has acted swiftly to identify what the school does well and what needs urgent improvement. Tough decisions have been made to increase the school's effectiveness and build further capacity to make improvements. There have been changes to staffing, with five new teachers and 11 teaching assistants joining the school this term.
- In a short space of time, the executive headteacher has raised staff morale and won the confidence of pupils and their parents. She has prioritised ensuring that all

safeguarding arrangements are fully in place and pupils are kept safe and secure on the school site. Policy and procedures to manage behaviour effectively have been tightened up. The rewards and sanctions used by staff to maintain good behaviour have been reaffirmed. Rightly, her next priority is securing consistently good teaching across the school. Plans to embed a revised curriculum and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education further are in place.

- The current self-evaluation of the school is too generous. Judgements are based on the improvements made so far in a very short space of time, rather than on sustained, substantial improvements to pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, this evaluation has informed plans for improvement. These plans are suitably prioritised but lack measurable targets to hold staff fully accountable.
- An external consultant commissioned by governors to provide leaders with additional support is helping to establish systematic procedures for monitoring the school's work and for assessing pupils' progress. She is also supporting newly appointed subject leaders of English and mathematics to help them develop their roles. These procedures are new and need much more time to become firmly established.

### **Governance of the school**

- Previous weaknesses in governance have been resolved by reforming as a new, single governing body to oversee both schools in the federation. Governors bring a wealth of knowledge and experience from a wide range of professions. Minutes of their latest meeting show that they demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's work and the need for rapid improvement. At this early stage, they are providing senior leaders with good support. They acknowledge that, as leaders become firmly established, further challenge will be needed to ensure that improvements are made in a timely way.
- Governors recognise the importance of improving the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils this year. Revised plans are in place to target the pupil premium more effectively towards disadvantaged pupils, and for strengthening the monitoring of the impact of this spending.
- Leaders and governors are working together to standardise school policies and procedures, and develop a single website for the federation. Governors expect to revise and update all common policies this term.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All necessary checks are made when recruiting staff.
- Recent improvements to the school grounds and buildings ensure that the site is safe and access is controlled effectively.
- Procedures to protect pupils from harm are thorough. A team of designated leads for safeguarding work together to maintain pupils' safety and well-being. Partnerships with parents and external support agencies are well established.

- All staff have attended safeguarding training, including on the 'Prevent' duty, this year.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Some teaching needs significant improvement. Until recently, teachers have not been routinely observed by senior leaders to evaluate their effectiveness. They have had very few opportunities to attend in-service training. Consequently, the quality of teaching varies widely. Three of the five new teachers who joined the school this term are newly qualified.
- Expectations of pupils are not always high enough. Inspectors found that teachers often plan the same tasks for pupils of different abilities. The most able pupils cope easily with this work and are not fully challenged to do their very best. They often spend too long listening to introductions, even though they understand what they need to do.
- Teachers' planning is inconsistent, mainly because they do not have reliable assessment information about pupils' current progress. Without this information, teachers are unclear about how well each pupil is progressing and whether they need additional support or require extra challenge. Marking of pupils' work and advice about how to avoid common errors and improve their work are not applied consistently in line with the school's agreed policy. These procedures are under review to ensure that they contribute fully to raising achievement.
- Improvement plans include a programme of in-service training to increase individual teachers' effectiveness. Newly qualified staff have regular training and feel well supported by their mentors and teachers of other classes in their year groups. Leaders are beginning to monitor the impact of teaching through lesson observations and scrutiny of work, but this is at an early stage of development.
- Inspectors found that staff forge good relations with pupils and are confident in managing behaviour. They praise and reward positive attitudes. In lessons, they make effective use of teaching assistants to support those needing additional help with their literacy and numeracy. Where teaching is most effective, teachers are well organised. They use questioning well to test pupils' understanding. They enable pupils to work by themselves and in groups without the direct support of adults. They model what they want pupils to do. Pupils readily engage in discussion and volunteer to come out to the front of the class to demonstrate and show others their work.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Good

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is an inclusive school. Staff go out of their way to meet the personal needs of pupils, especially those who have social, emotional and behavioural needs. Staff know these pupils well and put in place strategies to manage them when they are upset or need help.
- Pupils are well cared for. One pupil told inspectors, 'The best thing about school is that

there's always someone there to look out for you.' They feel that school is a safe, friendly place to be. They enjoy school and attend regularly. Overall attendance is consistently above average. Robust procedures, including first-day calling, are in place to follow up pupils absent from school.

- Lunchtimes have been extended to give pupils time to eat well and socialise with each other. They conduct themselves sensibly in the dining halls, and play cooperatively outside in the playground.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Inspectors found pupils to be polite, courteous and respectful. They were keen to hold open doors, say hello and chat with inspectors. Very few incidents of poor behaviour were noted in lessons or outside at breaks and lunchtimes. This confirmed leaders' views that behaviour is generally good and that it is managed effectively by staff.
- Good behaviour and attitudes in lessons are rewarded with 'Dojos', which pupils value highly. They like the fact that their parents quickly get to know how many rewards they accrue each week.
- Pupils feel free from all forms of bullying. They know how to keep safe online and when using mobile phones. They say that some name-calling does happen in the playground and this can hurt the feelings of others. However, they are confident that, if they report it, a member of staff will help them to resolve it.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Over the past two years, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has been above or close to national averages. However, closer analysis reveals widespread underachievement. Based on their above-average starting points, too many pupils have not made the progress expected of them.
- The school is allocated a significant proportion of pupil premium funding, but this has had little impact on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils make much less progress than others. Differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared to others in school and in other schools nationally show no signs of closing.
- Far fewer most-able pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, exceed the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Additional funding for improving provision and outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has not been spent effectively. These pupils have underachieved because their progress has not been routinely monitored.
- Over the past two years, girls have outperformed boys. The results for 2017 show that this trend continues.
- Until recently, there has been little evidence in school to show that leaders have

thoroughly analysed the progress made by different groups of pupils or considered the reasons why they underachieve. Insufficient action has been taken to intervene and prevent it from happening. Establishing new monitoring procedures is one of the school's top priorities this year.

- The school's current data shows that, based on assessments carried out at the end of the last academic year, the majority of pupils in all years are not making the progress expected of them. Leaders are using this information as a baseline to illustrate the impact of their recent work to raise achievement. They feel that, this term, their revised assessment procedures will provide a much clearer picture of pupils' current progress and will enable staff to identify those in need of additional support or further challenge.
- Observations by inspectors found that, currently, pupils are making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics due to the school's sharper focus on improving teaching. Pupils' books show that they are working steadily, but the most able pupils need further challenge in order to accelerate their progress.
- Most pupils enjoy reading. They told inspectors that they like the programme used in school to help them accelerate their reading skills, which also encourages them to read well and often. Leaders acknowledge that this is working well. They recognise the need to expand the range of books available and that staff need to monitor pupils' reading more closely to ensure that pupils experience a broader range of literature.

## School details

Unique reference number	120987
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10036269

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Smith
Executive Headteacher	Joanna Pedlow
Telephone number	01362 694 919
Website	<a href="http://www.toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk">www.toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk">head@toftwood.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. Some policies are under review to align them with both schools in the federation.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with an education, health and care plan, is above average.
- The school federated with Toftwood Infant School in 2017. An executive headteacher leads both schools. The federation has a single governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed almost all teachers at work in lessons. They carried out learning walks with senior leaders to observe pupils at work and to gauge the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, three newly qualified teachers, the chair and three other members of the federation's governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of pupils' attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books in lessons and a sample of books belonging to Year 6 pupils from last year. They considered 59 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. School leaders did not carry out Ofsted questionnaires for pupils, staff or parents.

## Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sandra Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Henry Weir	Ofsted Inspector

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