

Lionel Walden Primary School

High Street, Doddington, March, Cambridgeshire PE15 0TF

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher demonstrates a determination and relentless drive for improvement that are shared by all leaders and staff.
- Governors have an aspirational vision for the school. They provide high levels of challenge and support. They know the areas that need further development.
- Pupils feel safe and exceptionally well cared for by all staff. They behave with respect and consideration towards each other, and speak politely and confidently to adults.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are extremely positive.
- Standards of presentation, including handwriting, both in books and on display are consistently high.
- Pupils across the school are making good progress from their starting points.
- Children have an excellent start in the early years. Staff understand children's needs and plan exciting activities that engage them and make them want to learn.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress, and outcomes continue to match and exceed national expectations.
- Pupils who have additional needs make good progress. Staff are aware of their needs and provide support promptly and effectively.
- Teaching is typically good and is characterised by high expectations, good subject knowledge and effective questioning.
- A lack of precise knowledge of national curriculum expectations slows progress.
- Sometimes, assessment information is not used effectively to ensure that work is sufficiently challenging, especially for the most able.
- Outcomes in writing at key stage 2 show that some pupils do not produce work with the level of competence required to attain at greater depth.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate progress by:
 - using assessment opportunities to target individual needs precisely
 - ensuring consistent understanding of the subject content of the national curriculum and how to apply this when assessing pupils' learning
 - providing pupils, especially the most able, with good opportunities to write with greater skill and complexity.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is a well-respected leader. She leads with a determination and ambition that creates a culture of high expectations that the whole community embraces. She has inspired a palpable sense of common purpose among all leaders to pursue the best possible outcomes for every pupil.
- The headteacher is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who brings rigour and expertise to her role, especially in relation to the early years provision. They work very well as a team, providing very effective leadership for the staff team.
- Middle leaders display the same focus and ambition as senior leaders. They are fully accountable for the standards and quality of work in their areas of responsibility. Supported by the senior leaders, they monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions very effectively.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate. Leaders have correctly identified areas for improvement and taken decisive action. There are rigorous processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. Teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils make. Teachers' performance management targets are linked to the school improvement priorities.
- High-quality professional development is a strength of the school. When training needs are identified, opportunities are quickly sought to meet them. All staff members have regular access to a wide range of training opportunities, which are organised and shared across the teaching school alliance.
- Leaders are constantly looking at ways to improve their assessment practices so that all pupils make good and better progress across the school. There has been a renewed focus on ensuring that more of the most able pupils work at the highest standards, especially in writing and reading, by the end of key stage 2.
- Leaders have implemented procedures to ensure that the pupils who join the school during key stage 2 have their needs quickly assessed and met. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points on entry to the school. Pupils settle in quickly because leaders manage the process well.
- The school's curriculum is very well designed to meet the needs of pupils. The broad and relevant curriculum helps pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively and make good progress across all subject areas.
- The curriculum is particularly coherent in the way in which separate subject areas link together without losing the particular features of each subject. For example, history topics in every year group allow pupils to continue to develop their literacy and numeracy skills and to learn key historical concepts such as chronology.
- The teaching of science, using a very practical enquiry-based approach, ignites pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, which is reinforced during science week.
- Leaders use the pupil premium effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. Many of the pupils join the school during the year and in year groups other than Reception. Additional support for Year 6 last year successfully enabled many pupils to reach the

standards expected for their age. The individual needs of the most able disadvantaged pupils are not targeted precisely enough for them to reach the highest standards.

- Leaders provide very good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They monitor and target the spending of additional funding effectively. The leader of special educational needs is very knowledgeable and plans the provision well. Regular consultation with pupils and their parents helps to gain an accurate view of progress. The coordinator leads by example in developing the expertise of staff and provides support for other schools across the teaching school alliance and the local authority.
- The additional government funding to promote sport and physical education is spent effectively. It is used well to provide professional development and training for staff. Pupils' participation in sporting activities and competitions has increased. As a result, Lionel Walden Primary School has a well-founded reputation for success in competitive sport.
- The school introduced walking a mile a day as part of its commitment to developing healthy lifestyles. Staff, pupils and parents now readily take part and exchange ideas about how to stay healthy.
- The vast majority of parents are positive about the school. Parents told the inspectors that their children are happy at school and that staff are always welcoming.
- The local authority provides appropriate light-touch support for the school. It recognises the many strengths among the school leaders and utilises their skills to support other local schools.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of the school's work because governors provide rigorous challenge and support to school leaders. The chair of governors provides high-quality leadership to a highly effective team that is both forward thinking and outward looking.
- Governors have an excellent understanding of how well the school is doing. They check the school's performance through regular, focused visits, which are well documented, and appropriate action is taken. Governors also lead on specific subjects or areas of responsibility, and they meet regularly with the school leaders to check progress against these.
- Governors monitor the school finances effectively and ensure that identified school improvement priorities are acted on. This was evident in their support for the new approach to teaching spelling and the considerable investment in improving reading. They have a clear understanding of the way in which extra funding for disadvantaged pupils and for sport and physical education is being spent, and how it positively impacts on pupils' achievement.
- Governors have worked closely with the headteacher and local authority to ensure that the number of pupils admitted in each year is consistent across the school. This is allowing the school to deploy resources more efficiently.
- Governors are fully involved in overseeing arrangements for performance management, including that of the headteacher, and in ensuring that good and better performance

for all staff is rewarded appropriately.

- Governors are meticulous in carrying out their statutory responsibilities and take every opportunity to attend training, for example, on child protection and safer recruitment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school site is safe and secure. All visitors to the school are welcomed through the secure entrance, their credentials are checked and the school provides them with information about the safeguarding procedures in place.
- The school is vigilant in carrying out safeguarding checks to assess adults' suitability to work with children. All staff are trained appropriately, and the majority have received training at a level above that which is required.
- The systems for making referrals to the designated safeguarding lead are rigorous and thorough. Staff have a detailed understanding of local vulnerabilities and know what to do if they have a concern about pupils' safety or welfare. Similarly, the school works very effectively with other agencies to protect any children who might be at risk.
- Risk assessments are very thorough. All potential risks are taken seriously and addressed. For example, the attendance of vulnerable groups is closely tracked so that concerns can be identified and acted on swiftly.
- Pupils spoke confidently about the range of adults to whom they can turn for support. They also know how to stay safe and have a secure understanding of the dangers associated with social media and the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- A well-established cycle of monitoring, support and challenge ensures that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good and continuing to improve further. Teachers plan pupils' learning carefully, based on a sound understanding of their individual needs.
- All adults have high expectations for pupils' academic achievement as well as their behaviour, and pupils rise to them, demonstrating a keenness to learn. Transitions between activities are usually smooth and, as a result, time in lessons is largely used efficiently.
- Classrooms and corridors provide vibrant learning environments for pupils. Pupils' work is celebrated in the attractive displays. Pupils use the prompts on the walls to find guidance that extends their basic skills in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and use appropriate technical vocabulary with precision. This helps pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the key concepts in each subject and to make good progress. Extensive scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrates the positive impact that teaching is having on securing good outcomes for pupils over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as being vulnerable are well supported and fully access the curriculum alongside their

classmates. As a result of the well-planned, individualised support programmes and effective interventions, pupils make good and often better progress from their starting points.

- The deployment of well-trained teaching assistants and the impact that this has on pupils' progress are strengths of the school. Teaching assistants have good levels of knowledge to support their roles and work as a strong team with all teachers, establishing very positive relationships with pupils.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength of the school in the early years and key stage 1. This good teaching continues into key stage 2. This enables pupils to read widely and fluently, using their reading skills to access information across all subjects.
- The teaching of reading and spelling has been the focus of recent development work. The introduction of new ways to extend the most able readers in key stage 2 is having a positive impact on accelerating progress, as are the new approaches to teaching spelling across key stage 2.
- Pupils take great pride in their work. The presentation of work across all subjects, including handwriting, is of a consistently high standard across the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. New systems to embed mathematical concepts outside numeracy lessons have been welcomed by staff. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make a point of using the correct terminology that pupils then use accurately in their responses.
- Evidence in books shows that pupils gain confidence in calculating using a variety of methods. Some books show ample opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to solve problems and carry out their reasoning to a greater depth, although this is not consistently the case.
- Teachers track pupils' progress and attainment carefully over time. However, teachers have not yet fully embedded an understanding of the increased demands of the national curriculum across the school. Pupils who are confident in the concepts being taught are not provided with sufficient activities that further secure their understanding. As a result, the rates of progress, particularly for the most able including the most able disadvantaged pupils, is not as rapid as it could be.
- Effective teaching is characterised by very effective questioning that consistently assesses, probes and develops pupils' understanding well. Teachers use opportunities to address pupils' misconceptions or errors constructively to help them to make progress.
- Teaching develops pupils' key skills well in reading, writing and mathematics across all areas of the curriculum, including topic work. Nonetheless, the ability of the most able pupils to write with the high levels of skill required by the end of key stage 2 is not yet fully developed. The school is rightly prioritising this as an area to work on, and a recent cross-school writing project and a whole-school focus on developing vocabulary have led to improved progress, which is evident in writing books.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school is a bright, engaging, nurturing environment and is a very cohesive community. All adults strive to meet the needs of the 'whole child'. Pupils receive support throughout the day in ways that best meet their individual needs academically, socially, emotionally and physically. Consequently, pupils are confident and self-assured learners who know how to stay safe and be healthy.
- The curriculum provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils explore and discuss different belief systems. They also have opportunities to put forward their views on issues such as deciding on the position of the new outside reading areas and the games that the sports crew will organise at lunchtime.
- Many vibrant displays promote fundamental British values. Pupils demonstrate how these are very much part of their daily lives as they accept responsibility for their own learning and contribute to the local and wider community. Pupils understand the impact of hard work and know how to be successful. Their aspirations rise as they learn about significant people and their achievements.
- Numerous trips, visitors, after-school clubs and special events enrich pupils' learning and life experiences. As a result, pupils leave the school very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils speak warmly about how much they enjoy being pupils at Lionel Walden Primary School. One pupil summed up his experience by saying: 'We take the best of all the different teachers and blend them together to make us better people.'
- Pupils take a pride in representing their school. The school plays host to a number of other schools for a wide range of activities, and the pupils are excellent ambassadors.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct and self-discipline are evident in all areas of the school, including at lunchtime and playtimes and in assemblies. Adults set high expectations, modelling and reinforcing expected behaviours. Pupils are also encouraged to discuss how they might continue to improve their behaviour. As a result, pupils have excellent attitudes and understand how behaving well improves their learning and life chances.
- The school has ensured that the small number of pupils who exhibit more challenging behaviour have their needs met well.
- Family values are at the heart of the school. Pupils of all ages play together and eat together. They talk with enthusiasm about the ways in which older pupils support younger pupils. These include being playground and lunchtime buddies and reading to them. Inspectors observed older pupils supporting younger pupils in the playground to play cooperatively.

- The school has worked tirelessly on improving attendance. Overall, the current rate of attendance is above the national average. This is testament to the hard work that school leaders and staff undertake with families and pupils. In particular, by building a culture of high aspiration, the school communicates to all families the value and importance of attending school regularly.
- The school tracks all attendance very carefully. Pupils who are new to the school are quickly made aware of the school's expectations. Individual families are challenged but also well supported when their child's attendance causes concern. For pupils who have previously low attendance, this results in rapid improvements.
- Pupils want to come to school because of the good-quality education that they receive. An early-morning breakfast club offers pupils and their families helpful support to ensure a positive start to the day.
- Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well around the school. They move in an orderly fashion between activities. They are extremely polite and very friendly to each other and to staff and visitors. As a consequence, there is a calm, orderly and purposeful air about the school at all times.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Inspection evidence, including a thorough review of books, observations of learning in lessons and a detailed analysis of the school's assessment information, indicates good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across both key stages.
- Detailed checking of assessments and regular cross-school moderation, conducted by headteachers, the local authority, independent consultants and the school's assessment leader, validates the good progress evident in school.
- The school's assessment information and inspection evidence show that most pupils are currently working at the level expected for their age and beyond in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the early years and key stage 1, and the majority of pupils work at or above national expectations by the end of Year 2. These high standards are maintained throughout key stage 2, and the number of pupils reaching national expectations is above that achieved nationally, which is supported by work seen in their books.
- The focus on accelerating progress for the pupils in Year 6 in 2016 was effective in ensuring that the proportion reaching the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. Pupils made rapid progress in their last year in school. However, there was insufficient time to close all the gaps in learning to meet the demands of the new curriculum. This was reflected in some lower progress scores in the 2016 national tests.
- The proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development has risen, so that it is now slightly above the national average. As many children join the school with knowledge and skills slightly below those typically expected for their age, this represents very strong progress.
- The difference between the proportion of disadvantaged children in the early years

who achieved a good level of development and the figure for other children nationally is diminishing rapidly. The school's assessment information, supported by evidence gathered during the inspection, indicates that this upward trend is continuing.

- Attainment in phonics is strong, and a higher proportion of pupils than the national average reach the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check. As a result, pupils are often fluent readers, especially the most able. Lower-ability readers demonstrate resilience in the way that they use phonics to tackle difficult or unfamiliar words successfully. Pupils below the expected standard at the end of Year 2 are well supported and are catching up rapidly.
- Attainment in key stage 1 has remained strong, and pupils make good progress across the two years in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016, there were no differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates. A consistent and unrelenting approach to thoroughly embedding the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is currently preparing pupils well for key stage 2.
- The most able pupils in the school, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, achieve well across the school. There is a whole-school focus on these pupils making even better progress from their starting points. All the most able pupils who took the national curriculum assessments in 2016 reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, a higher proportion attained a high standard. In writing, however, there were no pupils who had high prior attainment overall and who wrote at the level of quality required to achieve greater depth in the expected standard.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well across the school. Careful monitoring of their work and additional well-planned activities develop their academic ability and their self-esteem and self-confidence. As a result, their attainment is often high.
- The disadvantaged pupils who enter the school in key stage 2 make good and often better progress from their starting points. For the past two years, the majority of the high prior-attaining disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in both the key stage 1 and the key stage 2 national curriculum assessments. The proportion of pupils who also attained the highest scores in reading and mathematics was higher than in writing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have either a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, are making as strong progress as other pupils in the school.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The responsiveness to children's needs and inspirational teaching are at the heart of the highly effective provision in the early years.
- The early years provision at Lionel Walden Primary School is very well led by the deputy headteacher who has particular expertise in this aspect of the school's work. She brings an enthusiasm and unwavering commitment to excellence that is shared by the whole team.
- Teachers in the early years are highly skilled in assessing the attainment of children on

entry to the school, including by home visits. This thorough assessment means that teachers have a clear understanding of children's needs and plan effective learning activities.

- Many children, whether they join in pre-school or Reception, arrive at the school working at levels below those of children of similar ages nationally, particularly in the areas of communication and language. The children make rapid and sustained progress. Even those who do not go on to attain a good level of development by the end of Reception have often made substantial progress during their time in the early years and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The quality of teaching over time is outstanding. The early years curriculum captures the children's developing needs and interests extremely well. There is a wide variety of stimulating activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers involve children, in ways appropriate for their age, in deciding which activities to undertake. As a result, all groups of children fully engage in their learning. This is a key aspect of the successful work that the school achieves in developing positive attitudes to learning from the outset.
- In particular, disadvantaged children make rapid progress in the early years, and the difference between their attainment and the attainment of children nationally is diminishing rapidly.
- Phonics teaching is highly effective in the early years and provides a solid foundation for further development in Year 1.
- Highly effective relationships with parents are established right from the start. There are many opportunities provided for parents to ensure that staff have a full picture of the needs of the individual. Parents are kept very well informed of the progress that their children make.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective, and there are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements. All the effective aspects of safeguarding seen in the school as a whole are clearly seen in the early years.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 110632 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 10037195 |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 221 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jo Dale |
| Headteacher | Sally-Anne Barnard-Taylor |
| Telephone number | 01354 740405 |
| Website | www.lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk |
| Email address | office@lionelwalden.cambs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 18 March 2009 |

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. The number of pupils for admission to each year group has recently changed from 34 to 30.
- There are two part-time pre-school classes and one full-time Reception class.
- The school is the lead school in the Fenland Teaching School Alliance.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club. The school also provides a

wide range of extra-curricular activities.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in every class and took the opportunity to scrutinise pupils' work on these occasions and at other times. A large proportion of observations in lessons were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. The inspectors also attended a singing assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other school leaders, groups of staff, the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A wide range of documentary evidence was scrutinised. This included the school's own self-evaluation, the school development plan, minutes of governors' meetings, records of assessments of pupils' work and information about their progress. Documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were also checked. Detailed information on the work that the school does within the teaching school alliance was also scrutinised.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to seek their views and listened to a selection of them read.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, for these to be taken into account. However, the inspectors analysed the parental responses to the questionnaire from July 2017 and spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Liz Chaplin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Randall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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