

Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School

School Lane, Fenstanton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 9JR

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Changes introduced by the new headteacher to reverse the decline in standards over the last three years are very recent. There has not been enough time for the full impact of this work to be evident.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. This means that not enough pupils are making fast enough progress. Too few teachers share sufficiently high expectations of what pupils should be achieving.
- Too few pupils, especially in key stage 2, are given work which challenges them sufficiently to enable them to make enough progress.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is too low.
- In recent years, middle leaders, particularly those responsible for English and mathematics, have not been sufficiently involved in monitoring pupils' progress or driving initiatives to improve outcomes. As a result, progress has slowed and standards have not been high enough.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of provision in the early years and, for the last two years, too few children have reached the standards expected by the end of Reception.
- Outcomes in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have not been high enough over the last three years. Also, there was a significant drop in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 in 2017.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly identified all the key areas where improvements are needed and she has already begun to make changes. These include a new approach to managing behaviour, initiatives to enliven the curriculum, timetable changes and improvements to subject leadership.
- The new 'university afternoons' provide exciting occasions for pupils to learn many new skills which interest and engage them. This enriches their learning and their personal development.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are strong. Pupils are well cared for, relationships are good and pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Provision and planning to support disadvantaged pupils has improved considerably.
- Governors provide clear support and challenge for the new headteacher; they are determined to ensure that the school improves rapidly.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - subject leaders are given the necessary training, support and challenge to help them raise standards and improve outcomes, particularly at key stage 2.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment and, as a result, raise standards, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers share the same high expectations about what pupils can achieve, so that work is appropriately challenging, consistently engaging and well matched to pupils' needs
 - opportunities are taken to share the best teaching practice across the school and, where appropriate, in conjunction with other local schools and services.
- Improve provision and outcomes in the early years by ensuring that:
 - teaching, learning and assessment are consistently strong throughout the setting
 - the new arrangements for leadership of the early years are fully embedded through training and support.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management requires improvement because those initiatives introduced by the new headteacher, and others which have been planned, have not yet had sufficient time to demonstrate a positive impact on raising standards. Nevertheless, the new headteacher has acted very quickly to identify weaknesses in teaching, leadership and outcomes. She has established a strong focus on school improvement which governors, staff and many parents already recognise. For example, changes to the timetable have been introduced to provide more time to focus on learning. French has been introduced as the school's modern foreign language and teachers are now being given more training in the use of assessment information.
- Over the last three years, leaders have not ensured that teaching or outcomes have been consistently good enough. Leaders have not addressed inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils and they have not ensured that lessons have been sufficiently challenging or ensured that enough pupils made good progress. This has been particularly noticeable for middle- and higher-ability pupils.
- Until very recently, middle leaders had not been expected to play their full part in addressing variations in practice across the school. Many subject leaders are very new to their responsibility for raising standards. They are keen to show that their leadership can have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes, but they are still at the early stages of understanding what is expected of them and how to undertake this work. While their leadership has not had time to have a positive impact, their determination to learn their roles quickly and to take every opportunity to support senior leaders is encouraging.
- The use of the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils includes opportunities for confidence-building, raising self-esteem, improving attendance and improving basic skills. The evaluation of these initiatives has improved recently because the leaders responsible for this work have developed new systems to track pupils' progress and to measure the impact of the different programmes. Nevertheless, this work is relatively new. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is still uneven across the school, and their attendance remains too low.
- Some parents have expressed concerns that, over the last couple of years, leaders have not communicated well enough, and some parents have not been satisfied that their concerns had been fully addressed. However, many parents now recognise that a new leadership team is taking shape under the direction of a new headteacher. One parent, typical of many responses received, commented to inspectors, 'The school has been through a period of big changes and Mrs Worth is doing a great job.'
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' rights, respect and responsibilities is evident around the school, particularly through the promotion of the newly introduced school values and the new behaviour management policy. Pupils talk confidently about their understanding of how respect, kindness, collaboration and honesty lead to good citizenship, and promote tolerance and friendship among people who have diverse personal characteristics. Parents also recognise and appreciate the warm, welcoming and friendly community at school. Indeed, the headteacher is already planning to increase links with the local community in order to give pupils a wider range of

opportunities to learn about life beyond the classroom.

- Sports funding has been used to provide specialist teaching and to increase the range of resources and activities available for teaching. This is having a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment of physical education and on the quality of provision. Nevertheless, the analysis of the impact of different initiatives has not been undertaken as rigorously as it could have been. The subject leader has not received sufficiently clear direction for this work in the past.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is carefully planned by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and members of the inclusion team. The SENCo has a clear understanding of her roles and responsibilities, and precise systems are in place to quickly identify pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and to provide them with appropriate support. There is a strong focus on helping these pupils to feel included and supported. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities often make good progress from their diverse starting points.
- Senior leaders are receiving good support from the local authority's advisers. The headteacher welcomes this support which she is correctly using to supplement her drive to improve subject leadership and teaching.

Governance of the school

- Many governors are new to their roles since the previous inspection, including the chair. However, they have rapidly developed a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are working in close cooperation with the new headteacher to raise standards. There is a good range of skills within the governing body.
- The governing body has improved its own capacity for strong and effective leadership in a very short amount of time. Governors were galvanised by their joint efforts to recruit their new headteacher in early 2017, a responsibility which they took very seriously. Governors understood that this would be a key factor in the school's opportunities for improvement. Governors possess the skills and knowledge to lead the school through the current period of improvement.
- The governing body can evidence their resolute determination to bring about significant and sustained improvements to many aspects of the school. They have correctly prioritised the improvement of school leadership as their starting point. They are offering appropriate challenge and support to senior leaders to ensure that improvements are sustained.
- Nevertheless, governors' recent actions have, understandably, not yet had enough time to show sufficient impact on standards. Middle leadership is not fully developed, the quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent and pupils have not made enough progress in English and mathematics in recent years.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders and governors have implemented robust safeguarding policies, which

meet statutory requirements. The headteacher has further refined existing procedures and records are securely kept and updated regularly. A rigorous approach is adopted to the recruitment of new staff, including thorough procedures for carrying out background checks and ensuring that appropriate references are always received. Staff are well informed and receive regular training on safeguarding, which follows the most recent national guidance. Staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the safety and care of pupils.

- The school works effectively with local agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families are identified and well supported. Leaders successfully engage with parents to make sure that pupils are safe and supported in school.
- Leaders ensure that the school's procedures and policies for keeping children safe on the internet are understood well by pupils. Regular updates and reminders ensure that the important message of keeping safe is revisited and reinforced.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are too variable across the school. Inconsistent teaching has resulted in too many pupils underachieving. As a result, not enough pupils are making the progress expected of them. Occasionally, work set by teachers is too hard for some pupils, while in other lessons the work is too easy. On the whole, expectations about what middle- and higher-ability pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Discussions with pupils and checks in their books show that pupils, particularly in key stage 2, have an insecure understanding of the breadth of mathematical concepts. Written work does not offer a consistently high level of challenge to pupils and opportunities to consolidate good-quality writing across the curriculum are not fully developed.
- Inspectors noted some exemplary practice in some lessons. However, at other times teachers were inconsistent in the amount of challenge and in their level of expectation about what pupils can achieve. As a result, the quality of work varies considerably across the school.
- The teaching of history, geography and religious education is also inconsistent across the school. Some lessons are thoughtfully planned, engaging and interesting, while others do not do enough to extend pupils' thinking.
- In the majority of lessons seen, teachers ensure that pupils present their work as tidily as possible so that they take pride in their work. Handwriting is improving, although not all teachers give sufficient attention to insisting that standards are rigorously enforced.
- Work seen in pupils' books, together with lessons observed, shows that science is usually well taught. Pupils are given opportunities to plan, carry out and evaluate scientific investigations and they are developing a useful scientific vocabulary which they use confidently in their science lessons.
- Phonics is not taught consistently well and standards at the end of Year 1 dropped significantly in 2017. The headteacher has quickly identified the need to improve teachers' skills, and the school has joined a phonics project where it can receive

support and training from the local authority.

- Teachers mark pupils' work and provide them with feedback in line with school policy. Pupils are taught to edit and improve their own work in response to the feedback they receive. They say this encourages them to learn from their mistakes. Inspectors also saw pupils making good use of opportunities to discuss their work with peers, and this too helps them identify and rectify their own mistakes.
- In some lessons, teachers use questioning very effectively to assess pupils' understanding and deepen thinking. When this happens, pupils respond well and make good progress. At other times, opportunities to deepen understanding are missed because teachers' questioning is not sharp enough.
- Achievement is higher in lessons where teachers make good use of time, resources are engaging and careful planning ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. In other lessons, too much time is spent either practising concepts which pupils have already mastered, or moving on to independent activities before pupils fully understand what to do next.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff and governors are successful in ensuring that the school provides a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can flourish and enjoy their learning. Leaders encourage responsibility through older pupils working in roles such as peer mediators, school councillors and applying to be 'citizens' where they can lead play activities, support younger pupils and forge community links. This teaches pupils to respect each other, cooperate together and be sociable and polite in lessons and around the school.
- In their classrooms, pupils have the self-assurance to put forward their point of view, and to debate with others politely but confidently. Inspectors also saw work which resulted from pupils imagining what it was like to be a new character in the children's story, 'Charlie and the chocolate factory'. In another lesson, pupils were debating what life must have been like for farmers during the time of the Mayan civilisation.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school, including when using the internet. Pupils explained to inspectors about e-safety. For example, pupils explained to inspectors the importance of keeping personal contact information confidential and never sharing their passwords. Teachers promote e-safety on a regular basis.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire agreed that staff give personal development and welfare a high priority. In particular, one parent commented, 'This is such a caring school; I never have any concerns because the staff all know the children well' and another parent told inspectors, 'My child gets plenty of support when he needs it and this really helps to promote his self-confidence.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers, learning support staff and leaders all share appropriate expectations about pupils' behaviour. Pupils work well together in lessons, sharing ideas, discussing their work and completing tasks cooperatively. Pupils are usually polite and kind to one another and courteous to adults.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils walk calmly and sensibly around the school, when entering and leaving lessons, in the playground and in assembly, with due regard for school rules.
- Leaders and staff know the pupils well and individualised plans are in place to support those pupils with identified behavioural needs. Pupils understand the new values and rewards systems and they know how they are expected to behave at school.
- While most pupils behave well during lessons, some do occasionally become inattentive. In a few lessons, inspectors noted inconsistencies in some teachers' skills when dealing with poor behaviour. These incidents of low-level misbehaviour, while infrequent, generally result either from a lack of understanding by pupils about their work or from an activity that is insufficiently challenging or too hard.
- Senior leaders act quickly and appropriately to address any incidents of bullying or derogatory language. They keep detailed information about individual pupils' behaviour, and their well-timed interventions minimise disruption.
- Senior leaders use a wide range of strategies to promote attendance, including careful tracking of absence, celebrating good attendance and contacting parents promptly when concerns about attendance arise.
- Despite these initiatives, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is lower than that of their peers. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils missed 7.4% of their sessions. This is well below national expectations.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- For the last three years, in national assessments, pupils' progress in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 has been below, and often well below, the progress of their peers nationally.
- Outcomes in mathematics at key stage 2 were particularly low in 2016, with only 54% of pupils reaching the expected standard, compared with 70% nationally. In 2017, this rose to just 61% compared with a national benchmark of 75%. Also in 2017, 58% of pupils achieved the expected standard in writing, compared with 76% nationally. The progress made by pupils in Year 6 in 2017 was in the bottom 10% of all pupils nationally in both writing and mathematics. The small number of disadvantaged pupils also made very slow progress.
- Outcomes in reading at the end of key stage 2 are broadly in line with national expectations.
- Outcomes for the current most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are also inconsistent across different classes and different subjects. This is often because teachers' expectations vary too greatly.
- The picture is more positive at the end of key stage 1, where pupils have consistently made good progress and standards have consistently been in line with, and

occasionally above, national expectations.

- Younger pupils read confidently to inspectors and used their phonics skills appropriately to read unknown words. Nevertheless, outcomes from the national phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils dropped considerably in 2017. Only 53% of pupils managed to meet the national benchmark, compared with 81% nationally.
- Work in pupils' books shows that current pupils in key stage 2 are still making inconsistent amounts of progress, although the school's own tracking information suggests a more optimistic outlook. Work in science is of a good standard, while in history and geography opportunities to extend pupils' thinking and to offer more challenge to pupils are not consistently taken. This evidence supports senior leaders' opinions that many pupils must make accelerated progress in order to catch up.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make variable progress because, while they generally receive good additional support, class work is not always well matched to their learning needs.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children join the Reception classes with a broad variety of skills and aptitudes. In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development by the end of the early years was below the national average, despite a slight upward trend. Consequently, too few children have made enough progress from their starting points.
- Additional support is in place to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children. This includes identifying opportunities to promote social skills, as well as academic progress in phonics and writing.
- The early years leader is very new to her responsibilities, but is making good use of support from the local authority's early years adviser in order to enhance her leadership role. Leadership of the early years is effective.
- The early years leader is aware that there are inconsistencies in the approaches to teaching and learning across the two classes and a plan is in place to eradicate these discrepancies.
- Across the Reception classes, teaching and learning are not as well matched to the assessed needs of the majority of children as they could be. Plans are in place to clarify the responsibilities of other adults working in the setting, and place more attention on assessment and planning. The intention is that, in this way, teachers can structure activities that more closely meet the needs of all the children.
- Children's behaviour in the early years is not always good enough. This is because the activities do not consistently take account of the varying range of academic, creative, physical and social needs of the children. In particular, arrangements to support children who have a lower level of social and emotional development are not routinely planned into learning activities. In some lessons, behaviour is not managed well enough.
- Safeguarding and welfare routines are appropriately established. Children are well looked after because staff give children's welfare a high priority and make sure that the statutory safeguarding requirements are met. Relationships between parents and staff are positive. Parents feel welcome and included, and they confirm that they receive

useful information about how their children are getting on.

School details

Unique reference number	110676
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10037659

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

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	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Volp
Headteacher	Claire Worth
Telephone number	01480 375055
Website	www.fenstanton-hilton.eschools.co.uk
Email address	office@fenstanton.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a slightly larger than the average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who are receiving support is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the

national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school, including joint observations and a joint learning walk with the headteacher.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in every subject and every year group and listened to Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read.
- They also met with pupils, formally and informally, to listen to their views.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher; a representative from the local authority; the deputy headteacher; the pupil premium champion; subject leaders of English, mathematics, physical education and geography; the special educational needs coordinator; the early years leaders and two members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation that covered: information about pupils' attainment and progress; the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; minutes of meetings; and records relating to teaching and learning, pupils' attendance and behaviour and safeguarding of pupils. The school's website was also scrutinised.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents through informal meetings and the 68 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Henry Weir	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Stevens	Ofsted Inspector

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