

Runton Holme Church of England Primary School

School Road, Runton Holme, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE33 0EL

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- School leaders have not ensured that pupils achieve well enough. Over the last two years, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have been too low.
- The school does not have the capacity to improve. The headteacher, who also leads another small school, does not have sufficient leadership support to help her to make improvements.
- The trust's monitoring of the school does not provide thorough, accurate evaluations of its performance. Its support has had limited impact on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers do not plan learning suited to the different ages and abilities of pupils. Time in lessons is not used well enough. Teachers do not take enough care to check that pupils understand what to do.
- Mathematics is not taught well enough. Pupils' learning is not planned effectively.
- Teaching assistants are not used effectively enough.
- In the early years foundation stage, phonics is not taught systematically to ensure that children can read well.
- The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate, but leaders' views of the school's performance are too generous. Improvement plans lack key milestones to check that improvements are being made quickly.
- The local governing body does not provide sufficient support and challenge to hold school leaders to account.
- Governors and the trust do not ensure that all required documents are available on the school's website.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed headteacher has settled promptly and knows what to do to improve the school. She has wasted no time in prioritising plans to raise achievement.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe, attend regularly and behave well.
- The school is inclusive and welcomes pupils of different needs, abilities and backgrounds.

Full report

In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is likely to be of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement to the school.

It is recommended that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - using the information gained from regular assessments of pupils' progress to plan learning suited to the different ages and abilities of pupils in mixed-age classes
 - making regular checks to ensure that all pupils understand what they have to do and are learning effectively
 - maximising the time available in lessons so pupils start work promptly and have time to complete all of their work
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are deployed effectively in all lessons to teach and support pupils' learning effectively.
- Raise achievement throughout all key stages by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils are capable of attaining
 - providing clear guidance for the teaching of mathematics and monitoring the impact that this has on accelerating pupils' progress
 - strengthening the teaching of spelling and grammar, so that pupils acquire the essential skills needed to improve their writing
 - implementing new procedures to teach phonics systematically in the early years foundation stage, so that children acquire a thorough grounding in reading.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - incorporating the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement noted during this inspection into the school's improvement plan
 - adding key milestones into the action plan to check that improvements are being made at a suitable rate and that the school improves quickly
 - strengthening governance to enable the governing body to carry out all its duties effectively
 - ensuring that the trust provides the headteacher and governors with regular, accurate evaluations of the school's performance and seeks ways of providing the headteacher with additional leadership to help her to secure improvements
 - ensuring that the school's website is fully compliant.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- There is not enough leadership capacity in the school to make the much-needed improvements. Results in 2016 show widespread underachievement. Pupils did not make enough progress between key stages 1 and 2. The actions taken by leaders, including governors and the trust, to tackle this underperformance had little impact. Pupils continued to underachieve and results in 2017 were equally low.
- The recently appointed headteacher shares her leadership role between two small schools. This limits the amount of time she spends on site. She does not have colleagues in leadership roles in the school with experience of leading and managing school improvement to support her.
- Significant change in the past year due to staff absence and changes in personnel have undermined attempts by the trust to improve provision and raise achievement. The turbulence caused by the changes and staff absence has had a detrimental effect on pupils' achievement and has left gaps in the school's leadership and management.
- The new headteacher has responsibility for leading improvements in reading and writing but, currently, there is no leader of mathematics to steer improvements or to provide staff with advice about teaching the subject. There is no detailed scheme of work for mathematics in place.
- Leaders have not spent enough time monitoring the quality of teaching and evaluating its impact on pupils' learning. Some ineffective teaching has been tolerated for too long. Over the past two years, the trust has provided a range of training and support for teachers and leaders. Much of this work has relied on staff, once trained and supported, to develop it further, but staff absence and changes in leadership have limited its impact.
- The new headteacher has wasted no time in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses, and putting in place plans for improvement. Plans are suitably prioritised and contain aspirational targets but lack timescales to check whether improvements are being made at a suitable rate.
- The headteacher has begun to monitor teaching to gauge what works well and what needs improvement, and to inform further staff training and support. Her raised expectations of staff have been made clear.
- Good use is made of the physical education (PE) and sport premium to enhance the quality of PE lessons, develop pupils' leadership skills and increase their participation in physical activity. There is a clear vision for developing this further by training a member of staff to lead the subject.
- Very few pupils are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding. The school's assessment records show that the additional one-to-one support provided through this funding helps the pupils to make expected progress.
- The school shares a coordinator of special educational needs (SENCo) with its partner school. Although the coordinator's time in school is minimal, she ensures that funding

for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used appropriately. Teaching assistants provide one-to-one support and additional help in classrooms. They ensure that the pupils engage fully in school life. Nonetheless, similar to other pupils, this group underachieves because learning is not planned well enough to suit their individual needs.

- Links with parents are well established. Only a few parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire during the inspection. Those that did were happy with the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is shared across both schools in the partnership. Currently, there are only two governors. The governing body is too small to carry out all its duties effectively. It struggles to recruit new governors, particularly parents.
- Governors are very supportive and ensure that statutory duties are met. They know where most of the school's strengths and weaknesses lie and are aware of the difficulties it has faced recently. However, minutes of governors' meetings show that they provide only limited challenge to leaders to make improvements.
- The trust carries out its own monitoring and commissions external reviews of the school's effectiveness. These procedures are regular and systematic. However, trust leaders acknowledged during the inspection that their monitoring and support have not led to sufficient improvement, and they accept that 'outcomes for pupils are not what they should be'. They feel that the trust can explain the challenge it provides, but cannot demonstrate the impact that this is having.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record of employment checks is maintained meticulously. All checks are carried out when recruiting new staff to work with children.
- Two members of staff are trained as designated leaders for safeguarding pupils. Detailed records of concerns raised are stored safely and followed up robustly.
- All staff are trained in safeguarding pupils, including 'Prevent' duty training.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, what to do in an emergency and how to stay safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers are unfamiliar with planning learning to meet the different ages and abilities of pupils. Usually, pupils are given the same work, so the less able pupils struggle to understand what to do and the most able are not fully challenged.
- Teachers do not use time effectively to maximise pupils' learning. Pupils get off to a slow start in lessons and do not have enough time to finish their work. Expectations of pupils are too low. They work at their own pace, rather than that set by teachers, so

the amount of work completed is minimal.

- Teaching assistants know what to do and know the pupils well, but are not deployed effectively to teach them and support their learning. When asked about improving the school, pupils said that they would not change much but would like more teaching assistants in lessons to help them.
- During questioning and discussions, teachers often accept the first response from pupils. They do not check that pupils understand concepts before moving on to the next stage. When pupils are asked to work by themselves or in groups, some of them are unclear about what to do. This slows the rate of their learning.
- In key stage 1, inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics mean that the literacy skills of pupils are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' books are untidy because handwriting is not taught systematically. Pupils do not understand how to lay out their writing or their mathematical work well enough.
- Older pupils who read aloud to the inspector did so fluently and with confidence. They have personal reading books and said that they read regularly.
- The school's marking policy is applied regularly, but teachers do not consistently help pupils to know what they should do to improve 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 that welcomes pupils who have different needs and are from a range of backgrounds. In this small school, everyone knows each other and gets along well together. Pupils' enjoyment of school is clearly evident. They attend well.
- The school's ethos promotes pupils' spiritual understanding well. Pupils are encouraged to look after themselves and others. They say grace together at mealtimes and pray each day in assembly. Pupils attend celebrations at the local church throughout the year. An annual visit to Ely Cathedral develops their cultural awareness of the lives of people in India.
- Pupils readily volunteer to help as librarians, playground monitors and school councillors. Older pupils develop leadership skills in sport. Pupils regularly engage in fund-raising events to raise money for a range of charities.
- Pupils feel safe and said that school is a friendly place to be. They are expected to show respect and tolerance towards staff and their peers. They are taught how to keep safe, including on line. An annual visit to the local fire station helps to raise their awareness of everyday risks and of what to do in the event of an accident.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of off-site visits to broaden their understanding of people and places. During key stage 2, pupils attend two residential visits to develop confidence and teamwork through outdoor and adventurous activities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are pleasant, welcoming and respectful. They conduct themselves sensibly, making the school a calm, purposeful place to be. At breaks and lunchtimes, they play together in friendship groups and enjoy the range of play equipment provided for them.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, even when teaching fails to engage them, because they have positive attitudes towards learning. They are able to organise themselves and work cooperatively together in groups.
- When asked about bullying, pupils told the inspectors that some name-calling, pushing and shoving happens outside at times, but this is rare and staff will always sort it out.
- School records confirm that behaviour is good. Pupils respond positively to the praise and rewards for good behaviour. There are very few serious incidents and exclusions from school are very rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The headteacher, governors and the trust acknowledge that outcomes for pupils are too low. Leaders have not scrutinised the reasons why the school's regular assessments suggest that pupils are progressing well, but results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are consistently low.
- Ineffective teaching during key stage 2 has led to pupils of all abilities not making enough progress. Results in national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 have been low for the past two years.
- Results in 2017 suggest some improvement in reading and writing, albeit from a low base, but not in mathematics, in which pupils continue to underachieve.
- Across the school, underachievement in mathematics is directly linked to the absence of a coherent plan for making sure that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are taught. Pupils do not have the knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics expected for their age, taking into account the pupils' starting points.
- Pupils' mathematics books show that they are all usually taught the same work, regardless of their age or ability and, for some, the tasks are too easy.
- Pupils feel that they are not doing well enough. Those who met with the inspector said that they need to be pushed harder in mathematics.
- Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to write creatively and at length, but their work contains too many spelling and grammatical errors.
- Assessment procedures are systematic and generate a range of information to show how well pupils are progressing. However, this information is not used effectively by teachers to fill gaps in pupils' learning, or to provide further challenge for the least and

most able.

- As other pupils across the school, those who have SEN and/or disabilities underachieve because learning is not planned well enough to move them on fast enough from their individual starting points.
- There are too few pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium to make comparisons with other pupils, and those nationally. Nevertheless, the pupils' work over time shows that they make expected progress from their individual starting points.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Children do not get off to a good start. There is no effective leadership of the early years foundation stage. The planning of learning and the monitoring and evaluation of the impact that this has on children's development are not carried out effectively.
- The very small number of children in the Reception class are taught together with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Staff work hard to accommodate this wide range of ages and abilities but do not consistently prepare suitable tasks for the very youngest children.
- Early reading is not taught well enough. Staff do not teach phonics systematically to ensure that children develop a firm grasp of letters and sounds. In lessons, words with similar sounds are not grouped together to reinforce children's learning. Staff use some words that are simply too difficult for children to understand at this stage.
- Staff are inexperienced in planning regular opportunities for both teacher-led learning and child-initiated play.
- Indoors, children spend too long on the carpet listening to lengthy introductions, leading to some fidgeting and loss of attention. When their behaviour is not managed consistently, they disengage from quality learning and make little progress.
- The outdoor learning environment is bright and stimulating and includes a wide range of play equipment, including dressing-up and role-play equipment. This is not used well enough. Activities are not designed to build on learning introduced inside the classroom. Outdoors, there are too few opportunities for children to practise making marks, forming letters and using numbers, or to develop their curiosity. Without this structure, pupils tend to occupy themselves or play boisterously with others, without much learning taking place.
- Teaching assistants ensure that children are kept safe and are well cared for. They make regular assessments of children at work and play, and record this information to illustrate their development. Staff provide parents with good-quality learning journals to keep them informed and share with them their child's early development.

School details

Unique reference number	141228
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10036091

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	5– 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Susan Read
Headteacher	Emma Zeil
Telephone number	01553 810394
Website	www.runctonholmewormegay.co.uk
Email address	head@runctonholme.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the curriculum, information about governors and its annual reports and accounts.
- The school is part of the Holy Cross Federation, a partnership with Wormegay Primary School. The headteacher, governing body and some staff work across both schools.
- The school became an academy, sponsored by the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust, in 2014. This inspection is the first section 5 inspection since the school's conversion to academy status.
- The majority of pupils are White British. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities. A lower-than-average proportion of pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Very few pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- A new headteacher took up the substantive role in October 2017.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards (the minimum targets that schools are expected to achieve) in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teachers and pupils at work in both classes. He spent time indoors and outdoors observing pupils' behaviour.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the chair of the governing body, two representatives of the academy trust and a group of pupils.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He looked at safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and other information provided by the headteacher.
- The inspector scrutinised pupils' work. He considered three responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and seven responses to the questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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