

# Pakefield Primary School

London Road, Pakefield, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 7AQ

## Inspection dates

28–29 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Overall progress rates are too low in reading and mathematics, mainly because the most able pupils are not fully challenged to achieve their very best.
- Teaching is inconsistent. Leaders have not applied the procedures to manage the performance of all teachers in key stage 2 rigorously enough.
- Leaders do not ensure that disadvantaged pupils make enough progress in mathematics.
- Less-able pupils are not always shown what they need to do so they can start work promptly.
- Expectations of some teachers are too low. Not all of them ensure that pupils present their work neatly. They do not make sure that pupils correct and improve their work often enough.
- Until recently, leaders have focused too heavily on pupils' attainment, rather than on the progress that they are making.
- New approaches and resources in reading and mathematics have not been fully evaluated to gauge the impact they are having on improving pupils' progress.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their reading by reading regularly together or reading aloud to staff.
- The roles of middle leaders in improving the quality of teaching and achievement in their areas of responsibility are underdeveloped.
- Until recently, the actions of the trust and governors to raise achievement and improve teaching have lacked urgency.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including the trust and governors, are demonstrating that they have the capacity to make improvements. Their actions led to significant gains in pupils' attainment in 2017.
- The good start made by children in the early years is maintained throughout key stage 1.
- Pupils' writing skills are developed well.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils say that school is a safe, stimulating place to be.
- The curriculum and enrichment programme provides pupils with a broad range of learning experiences that enable them to enjoy school.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective.

## Full report

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

- Gain greater consistency to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - applying the school’s revised procedures to manage the performance of teachers more rigorously
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan learning that is suited to pupils’ different abilities, particularly for the most able pupils
  - making sure that teachers show the less able pupils what they need to do so they fully understand and can get on promptly with their work
  - ensuring that teachers have high enough expectations and insist that work in pupils’ books is presented neatly
  - ensuring that teachers follow the school’s agreed procedures to provide pupils with more time to follow up the advice given to them in their marking.
- Raise achievement, particularly in key stage 2 by:
  - raising teachers’ expectations of what the most able pupils are capable of achieving so that they provide them with suitably challenging work to do
  - ensuring that the strategies and new resources introduced this year to raise achievement in reading and mathematics become firmly established
  - providing pupils with regular opportunities to read together, and read aloud to staff
- Improving leadership and management, including governance by:
  - ensuring that leaders’ evaluation and improvement planning focus more sharply on improving pupils’ progress in reading and mathematics
  - placing much greater emphasis on the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, particularly in mathematics in key stage 2
  - ensuring that the roles of middle leaders in improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils’ achievement become firmly established
  - adding greater urgency to resolving weaknesses in teaching and providing further challenge and support for staff who need it most.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders feel that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The monitoring and management of teaching have not ensured that weaknesses in key stage 2 have been fully resolved. Consequently, the overall quality of teaching varies too widely.
- The pupil premium has had little impact on improving the overall outcomes of disadvantaged pupils. The progress made by these pupils in reading but especially in mathematics over the last two years has remained low, and shows few signs of improving.
- Leaders of subjects and key stages have not been held fully accountable for the progress made by pupils. They have not been used well enough to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Raised expectations and further training are currently giving leaders greater responsibility for making improvements. Senior leaders and governors have not fully evaluated the impact of this to ensure that all middle leaders are contributing effectively to the school's improvement.
- Approaches to promote pupils' progress in reading and new resources to improve the teaching of mathematics have not had enough time to become firmly embedded. Leaders acknowledge the importance of evaluating the impact of these strategies to ensure that they are working and enable pupils to make much better progress.
- The headteacher, ably supported by his team of senior leaders, is leading improvement. His actions led to much better results in 2017. However, he knows that not all pupils entering key stage 2 build upon what they achieve in the earlier key stage, and make enough progress. He is leading actions to remedy this.
- Leaders are demonstrating that they have the capacity to improve the school. For example, their focus on improving writing last year led to significant improvement; the quality of writing improved across both key stages, and pupils in Year 6 made good progress, enabling them to attain standards that were well above the national average.
- Plans have been revised and include targets and timescales to measure improvement. The headteacher and trust leaders monitor these plans routinely to gauge the progress made in making improvements. Expectations of other leaders and staff are higher. Procedures to manage the performance of teachers have been adjusted this year to hold staff accountable for pupils' progress. Assessment procedures have been modified to enable staff to monitor how well individual pupils are doing, and pinpoint where they need further teaching and support to fill gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The curriculum includes a wide range of learning in foundation subjects which add significantly to pupils' behaviour and welfare, and their enjoyment of school. Pupils who met with inspectors spoke enthusiastically about their love of writing in humanities and participation in physical education (PE). Weekly personal, social and health education lessons, and assemblies help to broaden pupils understanding of British values. A wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities, off-site visits and enrichment days add significantly to pupils' learning and engagement.

- The PE and sports premium is used effectively to introduce new sports and enable many more pupils to participate in local tournaments and competitions. This year, plans are in place to widen the impact of the additional funding by providing teachers with more opportunities to develop their confidence and competence in teaching PE.
- The small proportion of parents and carers who responded by free-text and questionnaire during the inspection were fully supportive of the school's work. They praised the high-quality care and support provided for their children by all staff, and the good communication they have with school leaders.

## **Governance of the school**

- The academy trust and a local governing body work collaboratively to oversee the school's work.
- They are aware of what the main strengths and weaknesses of the school are, but do not show a full understanding of the reasons why pupils underachieve in reading and mathematics, or which actions are currently having the most impact on improving pupils' progress.
- Governors have not ensured that the pupil premium makes a real difference to disadvantaged pupils in mathematics.
- Governors are professional, well informed and fully committed to helping the school to increase its effectiveness. They value the work of the trust and feel that it adds rigour to their work.
- The trust provides a clear vision for the school and has provided additional resources to develop its provision. Leaders and staff have benefited from training and support from the trust's specialist staff, and from the wider opportunities to visit other schools within the trust to gain from their good practice. The challenge and support provided for leaders has contributed directly to the improved outcomes achieved last year.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record is maintained meticulously. All the necessary checks are made when recruiting new staff to work with children.
- Suitable procedures to protect pupils from harm are in place. A team of designated leads oversee the safety and well-being of pupils. Detailed records of incidents and concerns are maintained in a timely way.
- The school site is secure. Access to play areas and buildings are managed effectively by staff.
- All safeguarding training is up to date, including the 'Prevent' duty training, which ensures that staff understand how to keep pupils safe from extremist ideas.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching in key stage 2 varies too widely. Not all the weaknesses in teaching

have been identified accurately in leaders' monitoring and evaluations. Procedures to manage teachers' performance have not been used effectively to eradicate all weaknesses.

- Not all teachers plan learning suited to pupils of different abilities. Tasks are often too difficult for the least able, who often struggle to make a prompt start because they are unclear about what they have to do. Expectations of the most able pupils are too low. They cope too easily with their learning because tasks are not challenging enough.
- Questioning does not engage all pupils in learning or enable staff to test pupils' understanding. Teachers mark pupils' books regularly in line with the school's agreed marking policy.
- Not all teachers demonstrate a thorough understanding of teaching mathematics. New resources introduced across the school to strengthen planning and promote pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills are not firmly established. Not all teachers demonstrate to pupils how to complete calculations, or show them simpler ways of working things out. Pupils are not shown how to present work, so often their books are untidy.
- Teachers use a wide range of strategies to improve pupils' reading. Guided reading is taught regularly to develop pupils' comprehension, inference skills and make predictions. Inspectors found that pupils' good discussion was not always backed up with good-quality writing to confirm their understanding. Some pupils took too long to find key words, which slowed their progress. Reading schemes and personal reading logs are used to encourage pupils to read more often. The impact of these different approaches has not been fully evaluated to gauge which ones have the most impact on improving pupils' progress.
- Pupils who read aloud to inspectors could read with some fluency and understanding, but their choice of books did not present enough challenge for them. When asked what would help them, pupils said that they would like daily opportunities to read together in small groups, and to read aloud to an adult.
- Teaching in key stage 1 is more consistent than in key stage 2. Teachers know their pupils well and plan learning suited to their different abilities and interests. Teachers and teaching assistants work together to promote pupils' independence by getting them to learn by themselves and in small groups. Teachers model good writing by showing pupils how to use grammar such as synonyms, and punctuate their work correctly. Learning is made interesting and enjoyable. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils had great fun sampling Indian food to help them develop their describing words.
- Where teaching is most effective in key stage 2, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They manage group-work well, enabling pupils of different abilities to get on with their work, or ask for help from staff. Teachers ensure that the most able pupils spend long periods of time on tasks that fully challenge them. Teachers capture and retain pupils' interest, so there is little need to manage any off-task behaviour.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- The school is well maintained, warm and tidy. It provides a welcoming, nurturing environment in which to learn. The school's caring and supportive ethos is valued highly by pupils, their parents and carers. Pupils say it is a really friendly place, and that they feel very safe in school.
- It is an inclusive school. Staff go out of their way to welcome pupils with different needs, and from a range of backgrounds. Vulnerable pupils are known well and carefully managed to ensure that they re-engage in learning and take an active part in school life.
- Attendance is close to the national average. Procedures are in place to follow up absence systematically. Leaders' analysis shows that, despite the school's best efforts, overall attendance is affected by a small minority of parents who take children on holiday during term time.
- Breaks and lunchtimes are social occasions for pupils to eat, play games or chat together in friendship groups. Older pupils organise games for younger ones in safe zones, and 'buddies' make sure that anyone on the 'buddy-bench' has someone to play with.
- Members of the school council observe others at work and play to spot those who are kind and considerate towards others. These pupils are presented with certificates in assembly to recognise their good citizenship.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Inspection evidence confirmed the views of senior leaders that behaviour in and out of lessons is consistently good. Throughout the inspection, pupils were polite, pleasant and respectful. Those who met with inspectors were excellent ambassadors for their school.
- Pupils feel free from bullying. The school's anti-bullying week has raised their awareness of different types of bullying, and what to do to prevent it. Pupils told inspectors that incidents of bullying are rare and when they do occur, mostly pupils being unpleasant or unkind towards each other, they know they can approach any adult in the school to help them resolve it.
- Behaviours for learning are usually good. However, when expectations of pupils are not high enough, and teaching fails to stimulate or challenge them, a few lose interest and disengage from learning.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Overall outcomes achieved by pupils in both key stages in 2016 showed widespread underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Based on their above-average starting points, Year 6 pupils did not make enough progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Progress rates in reading and mathematics are low because the most able pupils do not make enough progress in key stage 2.
- Until recently, leaders have focused too heavily on attainment rather than the progress

made by pupils. Significant improvements in attainment were made in 2017. However, the progress made by a significant proportion of the school's most able pupils was below average. The proportions of pupils exceeding the expected standard by the end of Year 6 remained low in all three core subjects.

- Overall results at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 also show that disadvantaged pupils are not suitably prioritised and additional funding is not enabling them to achieve as well as other pupils nationally. Their progress in mathematics is notably low.
- Outcomes achieved in key stage 1 also improved in 2017. Attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportions of the most able pupils attaining a good level of development were below average in all three subjects.
- The actions prompted by senior leaders and trust leaders led to improvement in 2017. A range of interventions to fill gaps in the knowledge and understanding of pupils in Year 6 worked. The proportion of pupils attaining the combined expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics rose to above average. Overall results in reading, writing and mathematics were also above average.
- Leaders, including governors and the trust, acknowledge that expectations of the most able pupils are not high enough, and inconsistencies in teaching mean that these pupils are not always fully challenged. Evidence gained from observing teaching during the inspection confirmed that currently, where teaching is effective in key stage 2 pupils are progressing well, but where it is too inconsistent pupils' progress is much slower.
- The very small proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are looked after and known well. Leaders shared case studies with inspectors of pupils who have struggled in other schools before joining mid-way through the term, who have settled quickly and re-engaged in learning. Parents of SEN pupils who responded during the inspection praised the work of staff in caring and supporting their child's learning. Funding for SEN is used appropriately to provide pupils with effective additional support in and out of lessons. Learning in small groups and one-to-one support enables pupils to gain confidence in their reading.
- Pupils in Year 6 made above-average progress in writing in 2017 due to the intensive focus on improving writing across the school. The teaching of writing is secure and is currently leading to good progress made by the large majority of pupils. Teachers' expert knowledge in developing good writing is being used to promote good writing in other schools within the trust.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- High-quality care and good teaching enable children to settle quickly and enjoy school. At the start of the day, parents and carers join children in the nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes in their learning, enabling staff to get to know them well, and promoting good communication between school and the home.
- Strong leadership encourages staff to work collectively, as a team. Shared areas between the Nursery and Reception class and the outside area are used well to let children explore, find out for themselves and play together. When moving between the classrooms and outside areas, children engage in a range of practical tasks by themselves and alongside others, which helps them to become independent learners.



- Children behave well because expectations are high but also because they control their own behaviour. They play well together; they are polite, listen to each other and take turns and help one another. Minor incidents such as spilled milk are used well by staff to help children make the right choices and decide for themselves what to do next.
- Teaching is good. Routines such as arrival and departure, snacks and lunch are well established. Classrooms are bright, stimulating environments with a lively, happy atmosphere. They are well resourced, enabling children to use their imagination, satisfy their curiosity and develop a wide range of skills. Children thrive when learning outside because teachers plan fun activities that engage and enthuse them, and extend their learning fully.
- Inspectors observed children using beads and number lines to help them count up to 20. They persevered until they got their calculations right. The teaching of phonics is systematic and effective. Language is developed well through early reading, but at times, staff do not pose questions and explore new words fully to really challenge the most able children.
- Children make good progress, including disadvantaged children. An above-average proportion of them attain a good level of development, ensuring that they are suitably prepared for the next stage. Children are proud of their 'learning journeys' and are keen to share their achievements with their parents or carers.
- Children are kept safe. Effective safeguarding procedures are in place.



## School details

Unique reference number	141640
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10036244

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Gary Peile
Headteacher	Martyn Payne
Telephone number	01502 574032
Website	<a href="http://www.pakefieldprimaryschool.org.uk">www.pakefieldprimaryschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:M.payne@pakefieldprimaryschool.org.uk">M.payne@pakefieldprimaryschool.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Almost all pupils are white British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very low.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those with an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- The school converted to an academy in January 2015. It is part of the Active Learning Trust. This was its first section 5 inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed almost all teachers in lessons, mostly with one of the school's senior leaders. They carried out a learning walk to gauge the quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The team held meetings with senior and middle leaders, a newly qualified and a recently qualified teacher, two representatives of the academy trust together with five members of the local governing body, and three groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at safeguarding and child protection policy 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 mathematics books belonging to disadvantaged pupils in both key stages. They considered 53 free texts sent by parents and carers during the inspection, 60 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 47 responses from staff. Surveys of pupils' views were not carried out.

## Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christina Kenna	Ofsted Inspector
James Richards	Ofsted Inspector

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