

Ringstead Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Ringstead, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 4DH

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders provide strong and focused leadership for the school. Their plans for improvement are precise and provide clear direction.
- The headteacher is well supported by the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. As a result, she has secured better teaching through effective coaching and good-quality training.
- Children in the early years make a good start to school life. They enjoy a variety of well-planned, stimulating activities that motivate and interest them in different areas of learning.
- Leadership of the early years is good. The leader is knowledgeable and has high expectations of children's learning. As a result, the majority of children make good progress by the end of the Reception Year.
- Members of the local governing board know the school well and are ambitious for its future. They are able to provide the necessary support and challenge to school leaders.
- The school offers an exciting curriculum that inspires pupils to learn. It contributes to their personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and friendly. Adults provide good role models for pupils and encourage them to be enthusiastic, confident learners.
- Pupils are well prepared for secondary school. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils make increasingly good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and conduct around the school are good. The school is a calm, friendly environment where pupils are polite and well mannered.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the school in a range of subjects is good. However, checks on the progress of pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics are not as precise as they should be to secure continued pupil achievement.
- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information effectively to ensure that most-able pupils are sufficiently challenged, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not provide regular opportunities for pupils to write at length. As a result, pupils do not develop and extend their writing skills as well as they should.
- Leaders do not thoroughly check the impact of the pupil premium funding on attainment.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that leaders more effectively analyse the impact of the pupil premium funding to improve the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Make certain that teachers use assessment information well to ensure that pupils, including the most able pupils, are sufficiently challenged, particularly in mathematics and writing.
- Make sure that teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to write at length in order to further develop their writing skills.
- Ensure that leaders more precisely monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics so that pupils' progress and attainment are equally strong in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders provide strong and focused leadership for the school. With the support of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust and the local governing board, the headteacher has secured improvements despite difficulties in retaining staff.
- Plans to improve the school are precise. They correctly identify the priorities and the actions needed to achieve success. Senior leaders, trustees and governors are driving improvements forward and embedding good practice.
- The school improvement officer for the trust closely monitors pupils' performance. She visits the school regularly. The headteacher highly values the support provided by the trust to secure improvements. Links established with other schools within the trust have been particularly effective in helping to improve leadership and provision.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning have enabled leaders to quickly identify weaker performance. There is compelling evidence of how coaching and other support have improved the practice of individual members of staff.
- Leaders have been relentless in ensuring the best possible outcomes for pupils. They have made difficult decisions to restructure classes and year groups in order to ensure that pupils make progress and the quality of teaching they receive is at least good.
- Teachers, including those who are relatively new to teaching, praise the support that they receive from senior leaders and appreciate the training that they get to improve their skills. The headteacher gives careful consideration to the well-being of all staff.
- Due to its size, the school has a small but effective team of leaders. Individual leaders can discuss in depth how their work is securing improvements in their areas of responsibility. For example, in writing, lessons planned jointly between teachers and the subject leader have helped to raise the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have been determined to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. The headteacher has introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics. It was clear during this inspection that this approach is now consistently taught across the school. As a result, pupils are learning well and outcomes are steadily improving.
- The coordinator of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has ensured that extra funding received by the school is allocated and monitored effectively to raise standards and improve provision for eligible pupils. These pupils receive support that is carefully tailored to their needs.
- The school offers an exciting curriculum that motivates pupils and contributes to their personal development. Leaders are determined to teach pupils through a curriculum that encompasses global issues. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed well.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They gain a practical understanding of democracy through their school council elections and class debates. In addition, lessons and collective worship regularly focus on school and British values such as 'respect', 'individual liberty' and 'resilience'. This focus ensures that pupils learn about

the importance of the rule of law and the importance of, as one pupil put it, 'treating other people with respect'.

- The additional funding provided through the primary physical educational and sport premium is used to good effect. In addition to providing good-quality teaching and coaching skills, pupils have increased opportunities to participate in a range of sporting activities and competitions.
- Leaders have rightly focused on improving standards in English and mathematics. However, they do not monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of other curriculum subjects as precisely.
- School leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Nevertheless, leaders do not sharply analyse the effectiveness of their actions to ensure that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils improves more rapidly towards the standards achieved by other pupils.

Governance of the school

- Members of the local governing board have a good overview of the school and are ambitious for its future. They maintain a sharp focus on the progress and attainment of pupils and are effective at holding the headteacher to account for school improvement. They provide appropriate challenge and question the information she provides.
- Governors are aware of their responsibilities and visit school regularly to meet with leaders. The visits help governors to understand the performance of the school in areas such as safeguarding, the quality of teaching and learning and the progress of groups of pupils, such as those who have SEN and/or disabilities. After these visits, governors write reports and share them with other governors, ensuring that the governing board is made aware of any issues and can take necessary action.
- The school improvement officer for the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust has provided effective training and support for governors that have brought increased rigour to governors' actions. As a result, governors have been able to meet head-on the significant challenges posed by the changes in staff over recent times.
- Governors are aware of the importance of monitoring the use of additional funds such as the pupil premium. They understand that they need to check provision for eligible pupils carefully. However, they are not as effective as they might be at holding school leaders sharply to account for improving the attainment of these pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher ensures that all staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding and are aware of the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism. Staff understand that they have a duty to be vigilant and are fully aware of the different forms of abuse.
- The headteacher is tenacious in her approach to the management of child protection. She keeps detailed and accurate records of those pupils who are a concern.

- Senior leaders know the school community well. They work effectively with families and other agencies to ensure the well-being of children whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching and learning are typically good in a range of subjects across the school. The headteacher, supported by the school improvement officer for the trust, has ensured rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. Where teaching is less strong, senior leaders provide effective coaching and support.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. They plan lessons that interest and encourage pupils to learn. For example, pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class designed and created scale models of the solar system. They then enthusiastically used their models to create short video presentations explaining their learning to the class.
- Pupils receive good-quality phonics teaching and this provides them with a secure base on which to build their wider reading skills. Teachers and teaching assistants have received up-to-date training to ensure that standards in phonics continue to improve. Pupils who read to the inspector were able to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words. In addition, the inspector saw pupils using their phonics knowledge to support spelling in their writing.
- Teachers plan mathematics lessons that are well structured and build on pupils' prior learning. Pupils have regular opportunities to use their knowledge to solve problems. They increasingly use their reasoning skills to explain what they have done and why.
- Teachers promote an enthusiasm for reading. They invite parents and carers to daily 'book and biscuit' sessions so that parents and their children can enjoy reading together on a regular basis. As a result, the majority of children read regularly. Teachers use high-quality texts to enthuse and motivate pupils to read and inspire their imaginations. For example, children in the Reception class were developing their communication and imagination while engaged in play based on a fairy tale. In addition, older children told the inspector excitedly about how much they enjoy their current class story 'The Indian in the Cupboard'.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive effective, well-planned support. Teachers know pupils very well and work closely with parents and colleagues to ensure that additional support meets pupils' needs and is precisely targeted to move them on in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They use a variety of teaching and learning strategies to better engage pupils in their learning. As a result, relationships with pupils are positive and caring and pupils are enthusiastic learners. As one parent said about her child, 'He is supported well and with different learning approaches so that he can do his best and continually improve.'
- Pupils write for a range of purposes. The inspector's scrutiny of pupils' work over time shows improvements in the maturity and quality of content. However, teachers do not give pupils regular enough opportunities to write at length so that they can improve and practise their writing skills.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively. As a result, the most

able pupils in particular are not consistently challenged to do as well as they can. Conversely, where challenge is provided promptly in lessons, pupils make good improvements in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a strong ethos of friendship and respect for others. Adults are positive role models and pupils are proud of their small, friendly school. As one pupil put it: 'Everyone here knows each other, we're like a family. We know where everything is, everything is familiar and we learn fun things.'
- Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that their teachers help them with any worries they may have. The older pupils act as 'peer leaders' and, at breaktimes, they help other pupils when needed.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, confirmed that the school keeps their child safe. Pupils can explain the different ways to keep safe. This includes how to stay safe online and the dangers from peer pressure.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take. They said that incidents of bullying are rare but, if they do occur, pupils are confident that teachers deal with them promptly and fairly.
- Discussions with pupils and evidence from displays around the school show that pupils have a well-developed understanding of equality and diversity. For example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils explained to the inspector their understanding of direct and indirect bullying related to their recent learning about racism. As one pupil explained: 'Everyone has the right to be treated fairly. It's important that we open our minds and stop thinking stereotypically.'
- Leaders effectively promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils were able to explain how to stay healthy by eating well and exercising regularly. Pupils appreciate the salad bar provided at lunchtimes because they said, 'It gives us healthy choices.' They also enjoy the range of sporting activities, particularly the ones provided at lunchtimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is a calm, happy and friendly environment. Pupils are notably polite and well mannered to staff, each other and to visitors.
- Pupils understand that there are high expectations of their behaviour. Leaders keep detailed records of any behaviour-related incidents. These incidents are analysed closely in order to set appropriate targets for individual pupils. Effective strategies are in place, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

- Pupils enjoy school and, consequently, rates of absence are in line with national figures. Nevertheless, leaders are aware that attendance in this small school can fluctuate and are vigilant as a result. Leaders effectively promote good attendance and support parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly.
- Pupils are proud of their school and take pride in their work. In most cases, pupils work hard, listen carefully and concentrate in lessons. They are good at working with each other and are confident to share their views and ideas. However, in some classes, pupils lose concentration when learning lacks appropriate challenge.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Very small and varied numbers of pupils in different year groups make year-on-year comparisons of pupils' attainment difficult. The school's information about pupils' current progress in English and mathematics and work in pupils' books show that the vast majority of pupils are making good progress.
- In recent years, pupils leaving Ringstead have not been well prepared for their secondary schools. However, in 2017, much greater proportions of pupils left the school with the essential skills and knowledge to become successful learners.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check improved to above the national average as a result of effective teaching.
- Outcomes for children in the Reception Year have improved over the last two years. At the end of 2017, the proportion of children reaching age-related expectations was greater than that found nationally. School information for current children shows that standards have remained high.
- Standards of reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 improved in 2017. The proportion of pupils who attained higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive good-quality support and make good progress as a result.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress is broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. A higher proportion of pupils attained at the expected and higher standards in mathematics than in the previous year. Attainment of greater depth in writing rose to above the national average.
- Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 2 was below the national average. Leaders have reacted promptly to improve standards and raise the profile of reading across the school. The inspector's scrutiny of work, observations of lessons and information provided by leaders indicate that current pupils are making good progress and developing their reading skills well.
- The majority of the relatively small number of disadvantaged pupils make good progress over time. Their progress is tracked carefully. Leaders ensure that funding is used appropriately to provide additional support. This is specifically tailored to meet individuals' academic, social and emotional needs. Nevertheless, leaders do not evaluate the attainment of disadvantaged pupils precisely enough to ensure that it is

consistently improving towards standards attained by other pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader is knowledgeable about the provision and has high expectations of children's learning. She uses children's assessment information to plan a range of stimulating activities to effectively meet the needs of children.
- The vast majority of children start the Reception Year with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age. The combination of good teaching and warm, nurturing relationships enables children to make good progress. In 2017, the proportion of children who attained a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year improved from the previous year and was considerably above the national average.
- The learning environment in the Reception class is vibrant, motivating and safe. Activities in the indoor and outdoor environments provide children with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in different areas of the curriculum. There is a calm atmosphere where children are encouraged to explore and make independent choices. As a result, children are absorbed in their learning. For example, children independently retold the story of Snow White by creating a storyboard on a long roll of paper in the outside area. They drew different scenes from the story and added descriptive words to explain their pictures.
- Provision in the Reception class is inclusive. Children who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well. They receive additional support from adults, and the teacher appropriately adapts the provision to ensure that it meets children's needs. As a result, like the majority of children, those who have SEN and/or disabilities thrive during their time in Reception and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's reading, writing and mathematics skills are developed well. They are provided with opportunities to practise their letter sounds regularly. For example, children enjoyed creating different sounds and words from the Snow White story with labelled plastic balls, blackboards and pens. Adults supported children to spell the words accurately. Exciting games, for example using the interactive whiteboard, encourage children to use their number skills to solve problems.
- Assessment of children's progress is continuous. The leader collects a range of evidence to show that children are making good progress across the early years curriculum. She regularly checks the accuracy of her assessments with colleagues from other schools.
- Children's achievements are regularly shared with parents. Leaders' recent introduction of a new online assessment tool has enabled parents to more effectively share and contribute to their children's day-to-day achievements. The class teacher uses the information from parents well to build on children's learning at school.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 141723 |
| Local authority | Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 10041579 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 95 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | John Herrick |
| Headteacher | Laura Buckley |
| Telephone number | 01933 622734 |
| Website | www.ringsteadprimary.net |
| Email address | head@ringstead.northants-ecl.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Ringstead Church of England Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school.
- The school converted to academy status in February 2015 as part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.
- The school receives support from within the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. The trust also provides specialist support for continuing improvements to the quality of teaching and learning, as well as for leadership.
- The local governing board reports to the directors of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust on the quality of education provided by the school.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school experiences high mobility among its pupils.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all year groups and looked at a sample of pupils' work. She listened to pupils reading and talked to them about their school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, representatives of the local governing board and two representatives from the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.
- The inspector spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day. She took account of the 28 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the responses made through the Ofsted free-text service.
- The inspector considered the views of the 10 members of staff who shared their opinions about the school through the online survey and the 24 responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement, the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils, reports of reviews carried out by the trust, information relating to the safeguarding and the behaviour of pupils, the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils and minutes from a number of governing board meetings.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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