

Westwood Community Primary School

Maple Grove, March, Cambridgeshire PE15 8JT

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
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

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant challenges that have hindered leaders' ability to improve standards rapidly.
- Although current pupils' outcomes are improving, they are not yet good. Standards are too low in reading, writing and mathematics across key stages 1 and 2.
- Many middle leaders are relatively new to their roles. Consequently, they do not yet fully contribute in leading improvements within the school.
- The quality of teaching across the school is not consistently good. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of pupils' learning or behaviour. Teachers do not consistently teach lessons that meet the needs and abilities of pupils, or maintain pupils' interest.
- Teachers are not using the teaching strategies recently introduced to improve pupils' achievement consistently and effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should. This is because, until recently, suitable support has not been in place to meet their needs and ensure that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress.
- Teachers do not routinely provide most-able pupils with activities that challenge and stretch their learning. This slows their progress.
- Teachers in the early years and key stage 1 are not ensuring that all pupils in phonics lessons are learning appropriately.
- Too few children in the early years achieve a good level of development. Children do not make swift and secure progress, because teaching is not consistently well enough matched to their learning needs.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have high expectations and are ambitious for the school. Their strong determination is starting to make a positive difference to pupils' achievement.
- Attendance continues to be at least in line with the national average due to the decisive action taken by leaders.
- Pupils are well cared for in a safe, positive and inclusive learning environment. The nurture provision that the school provides to support more-vulnerable pupils is strong.
- The majority of parents are positive about the work of the school and say that their children feel happy and safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing the skills of new middle leaders so that they can improve the quality of teaching and raise standards in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the pupil premium funding continues to be spent effectively so that disadvantaged pupils across the school consistently make accelerated progress in English and mathematics from their starting points
 - evaluating the school's new teaching approaches to ensure that these are having a long-lasting impact on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics across the school by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave so that the inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching are eradicated
 - teachers consistently set work that stretches and challenges the most able pupils
 - the teaching of phonics enables all pupils to acquire phonics skills more rapidly and successfully apply these skills to their reading and writing.
- Improve early years provision so that more children reach a good level of development and are prepared for Year 1 by:
 - using assessment information accurately to plan teaching that meets the needs of all children, including providing more challenging and purposeful opportunities to ensure that children make rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the junior school has extended to become a primary, including early years and key stage 1. Early years and key stage 1 classes have expanded from three- to four-form entry. This work has taken a considerable amount of time and resources. Along with recruitment difficulties to establish an effective leadership team, leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching has not always been rigorous enough to improve standards quickly. The current leadership team is positive, re-energised and forging ahead with actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement rapidly.
- Senior leaders and governors know the strengths and development areas of the school well. However, the capacity to bring about rapid and sustained improvement has, until recently, been limited, with senior leaders trying to undertake too many roles of responsibility. The middle leadership team is largely new and, although eager and committed, is not yet sufficiently established to share some of the workload. Consequently, middle leaders are not yet effectively able to lead improvement within their specific areas of responsibility.
- There is now a stronger focus on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make the progress required to attain as well as other pupils nationally. Governors now challenge the effectiveness of the pupil premium spending. They have recently raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils by setting an appraisal target for all teachers focused on rapidly improving the achievement of these pupils. Leaders are now ensuring that the pupil premium is deployed more effectively to eradicate any gaps in the knowledge and skills of those pupils eligible. This focused approach has started to have a positive effect. For example, disadvantaged children now achieve as well as others in the early years. However, differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others have widened in key stage 2.
- The headteacher has set high expectations and has a clear focus on doing what is right for pupils and their families. Her determined leadership is steering improvements across many areas of school life, including the quality of teaching. The headteacher is ably supported by the enthusiastic and skilled deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, who all share her passion to move the school forward. Despite clear signs of positive change, these are in their infancy and so pupils' outcomes, teaching, and early years currently still require improvement.
- There is a tangible sense of teamwork in the school. Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate the training and support that they are given. As a result, staff are keen to work together and share leaders' determination to improve outcomes for all pupils. Staff are positive about the changes recently put in place and are committed to doing the best for all pupils.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is improving rapidly. The knowledgeable special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) and the inclusion managers now ensure that funding is better spent. Regular reviews of teaching and pupils' progress, including those pupils who attend the nurture group, ensure that specific programmes of support are increasingly

well suited to pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities currently achieve better than previously.

- Westwood Community Primary is an inclusive school. Leaders have ensured that there is appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The staff who support these pupils are particularly effective. This is because they know the pupils and their families well. They offer good support for pupils' well-being and encourage regular and prompt attendance at school.
- The curriculum is organised and arranged to ensure that a breadth of subjects beyond English and mathematics are taught. For example, pupils start to receive Spanish lessons from Year 2 onwards. Pupils have access to extra-curricular activities, trips and residential visits which enhance their learning. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy these experiences, which help to develop their confidence and independence.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well. Through their lessons and assemblies, pupils develop a good understanding of the range of cultures and faiths seen in Britain today. This positive and inclusive approach prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the primary sport grant to provide pupils with a range of sporting and physical opportunities throughout the school day. Specialist sports coaches work alongside staff so that they develop the appropriate skills to teach a variety of physical activities. Leaders encourage parents to take part in sporting events alongside their children so that families can develop a life-long love of sport and enjoy a healthy lifestyle together.
- Leaders have worked hard to establish a positive working partnership with parents. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, appreciate the hard work and dedication of staff. The school provides empathetic pastoral support to pupils and families. One parent summed up the views of many by saying: 'Westwood is a friendly, caring and supportive school. I feel that not only is education important, but also the child as a whole. My child loves coming to school, and comes home happy and motivated.'
- Leaders have developed strong links with agencies, education and health professionals and other local schools to strengthen provision. Governors fund external consultants to evaluate the school's work to ensure that the school continues to improve.

Governance of the school

- Governors make an improving contribution to the school. They use their range of skills and expertise to ensure that they fulfil statutory responsibilities. As well as ensuring that pupils are fully protected, they are asking increasingly effective questions about the achievement of pupils. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and, like senior leaders, have correctly identified the weaknesses that leaders need to prioritise to improve the school rapidly.
- Governors are supportive of the new strategies that leaders are implementing and demonstrate how, through visits to the school and discussions with staff, they are monitoring the effectiveness of these processes. The governing body is ambitious for the school and for its pupils to do well. Governors are determined that standards will improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There are well-developed procedures in place that are rigorously followed and understood by all staff to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Staff benefit from regular and detailed training that fully complies with the latest safeguarding guidance. Systems are in place to support the early identification of any concerns and ensure a rapid response to them. Staff work diligently with families, as well as other agencies in social care and in the community, to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Leaders have ensured that there is appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The staff who support these pupils are particularly effective. This is because they know the pupils and their families well. They offer good support for pupils' well-being and encourage regular and prompt attendance.
- Parents recognise and appreciate that the school places a high priority on maintaining pupils' safety and care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but it is not yet consistently good. The quality of teaching across the school is too inconsistent and, as a result, too few pupils make good progress over time.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons that meet the needs, abilities and interests of pupils. For example, where teaching is weaker, teachers in some lessons demand too little or allow pupils to come off task. On these occasions, pupils lose valuable learning time. Some pupils become uninterested and a few pupils start to distract others. This prevents pupils from making as much progress in their learning as they could.
- As a contrast, where teaching is stronger, teachers and teaching assistants provide pupils with effective questioning, high expectations of what they can achieve and subject knowledge that develops pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Where this is the case, pupils are highly engaged in their learning and making strong progress.
- Leaders have introduced a wide range of strategies to support the rapid improvement of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics, but these are not yet embedded in all classes. Leaders are aware that they need to monitor closely the quality of teaching and learning across the school to check that all teachers are fully adopting the school's chosen approaches so that standards continue to rise and the achievement of pupils rapidly improves.
- The most able pupils are not consistently given tasks that challenge them and stretch their thinking. Too many teachers are willing to accept lesser amounts of work or to overly praise work that does not represent a pupil's best efforts. Some teachers are too slow to challenge most-able pupils or do not expect more from them at all. Consequently, their progress slows.
- Phonics teaching requires improvement. The school's chosen phonics programme is not consistently taught well across classes and year groups. While the focus on giving

additional support to those pupils who need to catch up is generally effective, expectations are at times not high enough for more confident pupils in Reception and key stage 1. For these pupils, some phonics sessions do not have sufficient rigour and challenge. As a result, not all pupils attain as highly as they could.

- The teaching of reading is a priority for the school and leaders have provided teachers with support to plan, organise and resource their teaching more effectively. These improvements have been more successfully introduced in some classes than in others. Where reading is taught most effectively, teachers and teaching assistants skilfully introduce and model new vocabulary and question pupils, encouraging them to retrieve information and gain meaning from text. In other classes, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their inference skills (using clues from the text to come to a conclusion) and become strong readers. Some pupils have reading books which are too hard and this reduces their enjoyment of reading.
- The teaching of writing is inconsistent across classes and key stages. Where teaching is strongest, pupils' writing skills are being developed effectively both in English lessons and across the wider curriculum. Pupils are given opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes, such as writing poems or historical recounts.
- The teaching of mathematics is beginning to improve because of the effective training provided for staff. Teachers ensure that pupils have understood basic concepts and they encourage them to develop their knowledge of number facts and calculations through daily practice. Work in pupils' books confirms that teachers plan activities that cover number and arithmetic as well as mathematical topics such as time, money and shape, space and measure. However, the development of pupils' skills in problem-solving and reasoning is less consistent, and this has a negative impact on rates of progress, especially for the most able pupils.
- It is evident from looking at work in pupils' books that progress for some pupils is improving. This is because expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher, and stronger links between subjects support pupils' understanding. Teachers often choose to base their teaching across subjects on a high-quality book. This has given pupils a focus and something tangible to write about.
- Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are generally respectful and supportive. Teachers know individual pupils well. This contributes towards pupils not feeling afraid to offer their ideas and opinions.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, particularly those in the nurture group, receive suitably tailored support from well-trained staff. Pupils' work is carefully planned to address their needs and improve their learning. As a result, these pupils' progress and achievement is improving in a range of subjects across the school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and most have positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils are taught to be kind to each other and show respect to different lifestyles and opinions. One group of pupils commented: 'We're friendly and welcoming here. No one gets left out.' Another group of pupils told inspectors: 'We have good friends and our class is like a family; we all care about each other.'
- Through a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education, pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and have confidence that staff will help them if they have a worry or concern. Pupils also told inspectors that there is very little bullying in the school. If bullying does happen, then pupils are confident the adults will sort it out quickly.
- Pupils learn how to be healthy through eating a balanced diet, taking regular exercise and getting plenty of sleep.
- Provision for pupils who need support to work successfully in the classroom is provided effectively in the nurture group. In addition to planning personalised activities that meet the varying needs of pupils from their starting points, adults also ensure that pupils' emotional well-being is carefully considered. As a result, pupils not only make strong progress but also have a more positive experience in the classroom.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because, when teaching is weaker, some pupils do not consistently demonstrate strong learning behaviours that contribute to rapid and accelerating progress. For example, some pupils wait too long for instructions rather than actively seeking to get on with learning quickly.
- When teachers are not vigilant, a significant minority of pupils tend to wander round the classroom, fidget or waste time. This slows their progress and, on occasions, that of others.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is better. They generally play well together outside and demonstrate good table manners and behaviour in the dining hall.
- Leaders have worked hard to promote the importance of good attendance, particularly when children start school in the early years. Staff closely monitor why pupils are absent and follow up concerns with parents quickly. Leaders work closely with other external agencies, such as the education welfare officer, to ensure that any attendance concerns are addressed. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to be at least in line with the national average. Levels of persistent absence are below national averages. Leaders now rarely have to exclude pupils. They do particularly well with pupils who have challenging behaviour, managing it successfully.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders' actions to improve standards in key stage 1 and key stage 2 have not been effective. The progress pupils make is not consistently good in all subjects and all year groups. Too many pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for the next stage of their education.
- In 2017, the standards pupils reached at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 improved from the previous year. At the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of key stage 2, although improved compared to 2016, pupils' attainment remained below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress of current pupils is improving but is not yet consistently good across each year group. Pupils in Year 2 are making better progress in writing and mathematics, and pupils in Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes in phonics are not yet strong. In the two years since the junior school extended to include early years and key stage 1, the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have been below the national average. Leaders have introduced the school's chosen new phonics programme. They have provided training for teachers and teaching assistants to increase their knowledge and skills in the teaching of phonics. However, there still remains some inconsistency in the quality of phonics teaching, and the speed of pupils' progress, within classes and across year groups.
- The pupil premium funding is beginning to be used more effectively. Pupils' barriers to learning are swiftly identified and appropriate support put in place. As a result, in the early years, there is little in-school variation between disadvantaged and other children. However, leaders recognise there is still more work to be done in key stage 1, where the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, compared to others, is mixed. In key stage 2, the difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in reading, writing and mathematics has widened. In addition, disadvantaged pupils still do not make the progress required to attain as well as other pupils nationally.
- The progress and attainment of the most able pupils vary across the school. A number of most-able pupils themselves confirmed to inspectors that their work is 'sometimes too easy' and that they felt they were capable of achieving more. Teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the priority to consistently challenge this group of pupils. Consequently, the attainment of the most able is beginning to rise in some year groups. However, leaders know that there is more to do to ensure that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards by the time they leave Year 6 is at least in line with the national average across all subjects.
- Pupils' current workbooks and the school's current assessment information demonstrate pupils' achievement is improving in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in Year 2 and Year 6.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving. Work in books and observations in lessons indicate that these pupils are making stronger progress. This is because the inclusion team has evaluated these pupils' needs and starting points, and put in place more focused support.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception has been below average for the last two years. Children's starting points on entry to the school are broadly typical. This still does not represent sufficiently positive progress for many children.
- The physical learning environment in the early years is well resourced. Children have the opportunity to learn in purpose-built, attractive indoor and outside areas. However, the effectiveness of teaching in the early years is mixed. Children typically make more progress when working directly with a teacher or teaching assistant than when undertaking independent activities. This is because staff do not make the most of the learning environment by providing a wide range of stimulating and engaging activities so that children learn as they play. As a result, children are not developing their early reading, writing and mathematics skills well enough and rapidly enough. They do not get the maximum benefit from the provision available.
- Staff do not currently use assessment information as sharply as they could do to inform planning. As a result, teaching is not consistently fully matched to children's learning needs, which slows the rate at which learning progresses. Leaders do not have a clear enough overview of children's progress across all of the Reception classes.
- Children's work in their books demonstrates stronger progress for some children, but not yet all.
- Staff are keen to improve their practice and are responding positively to the guidance that they are being given. Adults are beginning to interact more effectively with children to move their learning on by asking relevant questions and providing timely prompts. These developments are at an early stage, but are showing signs of accelerating children's progress.
- Relationships between adults and children in the early years are positive. Although children occasionally play boisterously outside, behaviour is improving. Staff ensure that children are well cared for and help them to learn and play happily together.
- Safeguarding is equally effective in the early years as in the rest of the school.
- Parents of children in the early years are well informed and feel involved in their children's learning because staff provide a range of informative meetings and workshops. These events help parents to understand how to support their children's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	110641
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10046325

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	713
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Natasha Hardy
Headteacher	Gill Thomas
Telephone number	01354 653033
Website	www.westwood.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	office@westwood.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 December 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school, following the extension of the junior school to include early years and key stage 1 in September 2015. The school is currently extending the school buildings and expanding to four-form entry in key stage 2.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average. Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the government's pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and

mathematics at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in every class at least once. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by inspectors throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteachers, a group of subject leaders, newly qualified teachers, the school business manager, the two SENCos and the two inclusion managers. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors. In addition, the lead inspector spoke on the telephone with two external consultants who have been working with the school.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class, and around the school, at break and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school. They also met with three different groups of pupils more formally to discuss their learning and many aspects of school life.
- Inspectors heard some pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 read. Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading habits and looked at their reading records.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including: assessment information; minutes from the governing body meetings; reports produced by external consultants; the school's own evaluation; improvement plans; and records about behaviour, safeguarding children and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the 69 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 64 responses to the Ofsted free-text system. Inspectors also spoke to some parents before and after school, and during the inspection. Additionally, inspectors took account of the 62 views expressed by members of staff to Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors also considered additional views submitted by parents and staff.

Inspection team

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Henry Weir	Ofsted Inspector
Lindsay Hanger	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Pedlow	Ofsted Inspector

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