

Robert Kett Primary School

Hewitts Lane, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0LS

Inspection dates

16–17 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
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, achievement has declined in the school. Despite some more recent improvements, pupils' progress and attainment are not yet good.
- Pupils do not make sufficiently rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2. They do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders' capacity to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school has been limited. This has slowed the pace of improvement to better standards in the school.
- Some leaders are new and/or lack clarity in their roles. They have not had sufficient opportunity to raise the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Some teaching is not using assessment information to plan appropriate learning for the different abilities of pupils. As a result, the expectations of what some pupils can achieve is too low, including the most able pupils.
- Leaders' work to develop and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding across other curriculum subjects is at an early stage of development.
- A significant number of staff feel their contribution to school improvement is not listened to. Consequently, morale among staff is low.
- Although improving, governors are not yet confident about national expectations for schools. They are not yet holding leaders precisely enough to account for standards in the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear strategic vision for the success of the school.
- Pupils' welfare is a strength in the school's provision. Pupils behave and attend well. They are proud of their school and enjoy learning.
- Pupils are achieving consistently well in science. They have opportunities to investigate and explore in their learning.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their primary school life.
- Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. They develop early reading skills well.
- Leaders are developing strong relationships with parents. Parents appreciate the improvements leaders are making.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the skills of all leaders, including governors, in regularly checking precisely the quality and consistency of teaching, learning and assessment and the progress pupils make to ensure that they are good
 - clarifying middle leadership roles and providing opportunities for middle leaders to hold teachers effectively to account for the quality of learning in their areas of responsibility
 - further developing the wider curriculum so that it clearly plans for pupils' learning and development to enable pupils to develop greater knowledge and deepen their understanding across a wide range of subjects
 - making sure that all staff understand leaders' and governors' vision for improvement and that leaders provide more opportunities for staff contribution to rapid school improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve
 - teachers use assessment information to effectively build on pupils' prior learning and they support pupils to make good progress
 - where assessment identifies pupils who are falling behind, additional support is provided quickly to help them to catch up.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils make consistently strong progress from their starting points by making sure that:
 - pupils benefit from consistently effective teaching across a wide range of subjects
 - more pupils reach the national standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
 - most-able pupils make good progress in all key stages so that more pupils reach the higher standard by the end of key stage 2
 - pupils develop their knowledge and skills across the wider curriculum so that they are better prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Requires improvement

- The school has experienced significant upheaval since the previous inspection. This includes extensive building work, a four-year transition from a junior setting to a primary school and numerous leadership and staffing changes. These aspects have presented leaders, including governors, with many challenges and, consequently, the impact of this unsettled time has slowed down the pace of school improvement.
- Leaders have found it difficult over time to secure consistent approaches to teaching. Challenges to recruit and retain staff over the past four years have contributed to a lack of high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. Although there are improvements, leaders have not been wholly successful in ensuring that pupils benefit from securely good teaching against a backdrop of staff change.
- Staff morale is low. A significant number of staff consider that their contributions are not listened to. Governors and senior leaders recognise that there is work to be done to retain high-quality staff. Inspection evidence shows underperformance of staff is dealt with appropriately and leaders ensure that pupils' achievement is at the heart of all that they do. It is too early to evaluate the impact of leaders' actions to improve staff morale.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has changed to a primary setting. However, the local authority has not provided sufficient support to the leadership of the school during such a significant change. School leaders carefully select and engage in additional support, which they believe best suits the needs of the school. This additional support, including staff training in English and mathematics, is starting to contribute to improvements in pupils' outcomes, for example in pupils' achievement in phonics.
- Leadership capacity to undertake monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment has been limited. Consequently, leaders have not been able to eradicate the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. Subsequently, where pupils need to catch up, they are not being supported well enough to make rapid progress so that they make up lost ground.
- Middle leaders, for example subject leaders and some year leaders, are not raising standards quickly enough in their respective areas. While these leaders are committed to their roles, a number of them are relatively new and have not yet had time to bring about improvements. A few leaders lack understanding and clarity about their roles and responsibilities.
- While the curriculum entuses pupils to learn, it is not yet helping pupils to apply newly acquired reading, writing and mathematical skills routinely. There are a number of additional activities offered by the school to support the curriculum. For example, pupils talk fondly about their 'forest school' experiences, such as toasting marshmallows on the camp fire when learning outside in a natural area of woodland. They are enthusiastic about their school visits to places such as Mersea Island. However, leaders have rightly identified that pupils need more opportunities to develop and deepen their knowledge and skills in this wider curriculum.

- The headteacher has been rigorous in challenging underperformance in the quality of teaching. Leaders provide high-quality training, and they have increased the level of accountability in which they hold staff for the progress that pupils make. Staff, including those early in their teaching careers and teaching assistants, appreciate the support and training opportunities provided. As a result, after a period of decline, the quality of teaching and learning is beginning to improve.
- Leaders, including governors, accurately identify the issues and challenges that they face. They are all ambitious for the school and have an honest and reflective view about where the school needs to be better. They know that teaching varies too much from class to class and have secure plans about how to raise standards so that they are consistently high across the whole school.
- Leaders use and evaluate pupil premium funding effectively. It has been used to provide significant personal, emotional and social support. This includes appointing a pastoral care worker to ensure high-quality engagement and links with families whose circumstances might impinge on pupils' attendance and learning. Additionally, direct adult support within the classroom and the 'nurture provision' is carefully targeted to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- The use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is effective. Leaders carefully consider what the best help in class and in small groups will be and ensure that teaching assistants are well trained to deliver this support well. The school's approach in considering pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs, alongside other needs, is leading to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities making increasingly better progress.
- The physical education and sport premium is used well. Staff work alongside specialist coaches and so improve their own physical education (PE) skills. Pupils also have increased opportunities to participate in school competitions and take part in a range of activities, following the leaders' purchase of resources to enhance the outdoor areas, for example the climbing area. Involvement in these activities has a positive impact on pupils' physical well-being and on promoting their sense of pride in representing their school.
- Pupils are encouraged to fully develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding through assemblies whereby pupils consider features of fundamental British values, and through the school's chosen focus on the '5 Cs' 'care, consideration, courtesy, consideration and commitment'. Pupils are being well prepared to become good citizens in modern Britain.
- Leaders are working effectively to develop and build successful relationships with parents. Parents have become more positive about the actions that leaders are taking to improve the school. Many parents who spoke with inspectors, or who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were complimentary about recent leadership. One parent summarised what many said by saying: 'We have been delighted with the school. Children love going in every day and they clearly learn a lot. I would recommend Robert Kett to anyone.'

Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, the governing body has changed. New governors have high expectations, offer a professional, broad range of skills and experience and are determined to successfully improve the school. Governors are keen to learn more to ensure that they are able to support the school well. However, at the moment, not all governors have a full knowledge and understanding of some aspects of the school's effectiveness against national expectations and benchmarks. Consequently, they do not all have the knowledge that they need to challenge the leaders about their work.
- Governors undertake appropriate training and are fully aware of their statutory duties for safeguarding and ensuring that staff are recruited with careful consideration.
- The headteacher provides the governing body with relevant information about the actions leaders are taking to improve the school. Discussions about pupils' progress and attainment take place and are helping governors to gain a better understanding of the school's effectiveness.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school business manager has a secure oversight of recruitment procedures. These are detailed and meet statutory requirements. The headteacher's and governors' visits to review safeguarding training and practice are thorough and they are quick to identify any areas that could be further improved.
- Induction arrangements are well planned so that all new staff know how to raise concerns about pupils who may be at risk of harm. Inspectors spoke with members of different staff groups and all were very clear about the procedures. Leaders ensure that they update staff on policy and practice through regular team meetings and annual training.
- Policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe are fully in place. Leaders conscientiously implement procedures to help keep children safe from harm. Safeguarding records are kept up to date, and school records show that appropriate actions are taken when required. Furthermore, effective partnership working with parents and external agencies helps to ensure that pupils are supported and safe.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in the school. The curriculum contributes well to raising pupils' awareness of safe practices, especially online safety. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, and those with whom inspectors spoke during the inspection, agreed that their children are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teaching has not been consistently effective enough to help pupils make good progress. Although there is evidence of improving teaching and learning that is beginning to quicken the progress of some pupils, this is not the same for all pupils and

in all classes.

- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what all pupils can do and achieve. In these instances, pupils are not being given suitable tasks that help them to progress as well as they are capable.
- Some teachers do not take sufficient account of assessment information, pupils' prior learning and existing knowledge and skills. Work planned and presented, therefore, does not always suit pupils' needs with sufficient precision. This results in pupils, including those who are most-able, not being challenged enough from their varying starting points to make the progress of which they are capable.
- The wider curriculum is not yet fully developed. There is stronger teaching and learning in science. Pupils' books show that they achieve well in science by having chances to investigate and apply their scientific skills. However, across other curriculum areas there are more limited opportunities for pupils to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects.
- In mathematics, following a range of training and leadership support, teachers are improving their own subject knowledge. There is evidence in pupils' work that number and calculation skills are taught effectively across the school. This ensures that pupils are well placed to solve more complex problems and to start to reason mathematically. Opportunities for deeper thinking and application of the school's chosen approaches to teaching mathematics are variable across classes. This is resulting in inconsistent progress being made by all pupils.
- The teaching of writing is inconsistent across classes and key stages. Where teaching is strongest, pupils' writing skills are being developed effectively. Pupils are given opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes, such as writing recounts, explanations and various genres of narrative.
- Teachers provide pupils with frequent feedback. In some cases, pupils understand how this helps them. However, strategies for doing this are being newly implemented and teachers are still exploring their effectiveness. There is inconsistent evidence in the 'feedback folders' and pupils' books to demonstrate that the new assessment policy is contributing positively to pupils' progress.
- Teaching assistants have been well trained so that they are able to contribute towards helping specific groups of pupils make better progress. Teaching assistants ask purposeful questions, especially when they are working with specifically identified groups of pupils, such as pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, pupils who need to catch up and pupils who are disadvantaged. This provides effective classroom support. As a result, identified targeted groups of pupils with whom teaching assistants work are starting to make better progress in their learning.
- There are examples of where pupils' learning is stronger in the school. Where learning is best, staff use skilful questioning and adjust their planning to meet the needs of varying abilities of pupils. This helps pupils to correct any misconceptions quickly. As a result, pupils gain an accurate understanding of what they are learning and, subsequently, make better progress.
- The teaching of early reading skills and phonics is effective. Children and pupils were observed using their phonics to successfully blend sounds together and break down words into separate sounds as a result of accurate teaching. Pupils enjoy these

sessions and confidently apply their phonics knowledge to read new words. This is supporting pupils to make good progress in their phonics learning, particularly in Reception and Year 1.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive and caring. Adults speak respectfully to children and pupils and this role models the expectations of behaviour well. Pupils have a very secure understanding of the school's values, 'the 5 Cs', and talk confidently about how they apply these in their day-to-day life.
- Pupils are confident and articulate and have positive self-esteem. They are keen learners and enjoy talking about their school and what they learn.
- Pupils know how to keep safe in a variety of situations. They can explain the steps taken to look after them in school, including how to keep safe when using the internet. They talk knowledgeably about the dangers of sharing information on social media. Pupils also understand that there are different forms of bullying. They spoke positively about the confidence that they have in the adults around them to keep them safe. Pupils say that if any incidents occur, they are resolved quickly by adults in school.
- Leaders' targeted work to provide additional support for vulnerable pupils is ensuring that pupils' behaviour is consistently positive and that pupils are able to access support that helps them to experience success in whole-class situations. This is seen, for example, in the 'explorers' nurture group, where inspectors observed excitement and positive learning attitudes when pupils were learning multiplication skills.
- Parents are unanimous in their views that their children are happy and well cared for at Robert Kett Primary School. One view reflected what other parents said: 'Children literally run to school in the morning. We see many happy faces in the playground when the children arrive, and lots of playful interaction. It is clear that staff care about our children as if they were their own.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is a happy, calm and friendly place to learn. Pupils are noticeably polite and well mannered to staff, each other and to visitors. For example, one child in the Reception Year greeted the lead inspector, offering her a chair as they noticed she was struggling to write standing up.
- In lessons, pupils are often encouraged to work together. They collaborate very well and show mutual respect for each other. On a rare occasion when a couple of pupils did lose focus, other pupils gently and maturely quietened them so that they could get on with their own work. Pupils being told responded well, respected their peers' view and got back to the task in hand.

- School behaviour records show that any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are closely monitored and have reduced over time. When they do occur, effective strategies are put in place to support the few pupils with challenging behaviour, so that learning is not disrupted.
- Procedures for monitoring the attendance of pupils are securely in place. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. This is demonstrated in consistently good attendance that is at or above the national average and continuing to improve year-on-year.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, published pupils' attainment and progress have declined in key stage 2. From their key stage 1 starting points, pupils in Year 6 in 2017 did not make good progress in reading and writing. More starkly, in mathematics pupils' progress was well below the national average.
- Despite potential signs of improvement in 2018, leaders acknowledge that both changes in staffing and weaker teaching in the past have affected pupils' attainment and progress over time. This is particularly apparent in key stage 2, where pupils do not make the progress that they should in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, too many pupils do not attain the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- The school's first set of key stage 1 results will be in 2018, completing the transition to a primary school. Current assessment information and leaders' scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' achievement indicate that attainment is likely to be similar to that of their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Assessment in the wider curriculum is currently at a developing stage. Pupils do not consistently have the opportunity to develop and deepen their knowledge so that they are able to demonstrate how well they achieve in other subject areas.
- Disadvantaged pupils are starting to make better progress. Although they are still slightly adrift when their attainment is compared with that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, closer checks on pupils' understanding and more precise reviewing of their support is beginning to move pupils on at a faster pace.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are beginning to make better progress from their starting points. This is because funded support is increasingly better thought through. Subsequently, it is more effective in meeting not only pupils' academic needs but also their personal, social and emotional requirements. This is ensuring that pupils are empowered to succeed in their learning.
- Pupils' books illustrate that pupils' progress in science is the most effective across the school. Pupils are able to carry out scientific enquiries from an early age and can make observations and record them systematically in order to reach conclusions. This is due to pupils having more opportunities to undertake investigative work and apply their knowledge of what they know well.
- Pupils' outcomes in phonics are a strength in the school. In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check was above the national average. Effective teaching ensures that current pupils are likely to

continue this positive trend.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding similar to those typical for their age. In 2016 and 2017, the school's first two years of early years' outcomes, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was above national average.
- The curriculum offered in early years is exciting and varied. Children engage in a range of activities and choose to follow their own lines of enquiry when undertaking these tasks. With thoughtful planning and guidance, children develop their skills in areas that are most suitable for them to make good progress. The learning process considers children's level of need and ability well. Consequently, activities are closely aligned to careful thought about children's progress at all times.
- The Reception classes are stimulating places for children to learn. Activities indoors and outside provide children with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in different areas of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to investigate and to work things out for themselves. As a result, children are often absorbed in their learning. For example, children had re-enacted the forthcoming royal wedding and were observed enthusiastically preparing cake, considering the role of the photographer and writing thank you letters.
- Adults are trained well and are, consequently, highly skilled in teaching phonics and early reading skills. Children are now transferring these reading skills into their writing. For example, evidence in children's 'busy books' shows the progress from mark making to rehearsal of letter formation and followed by writing full sentences using a range of vocabulary and simple punctuation accurately.
- Children's mathematical skills are developed well. They apply their understanding of number by playing number games and solving problems in a variety of situations. They also use their knowledge of mathematical vocabulary when undertaking activities. For example, in comparing the sizes and numbers of cupcakes they were making, they were using the terms smaller and larger or less and more.
- Assessment information shows that children from all starting points make strong progress during the Reception Year. Learning profiles and 'busy books' for each child accurately reflect the progress they make, according to their needs. Records of children's learning successfully capture each step as the children move through their Reception Year. However, on a few occasions, assessment recording is not precise enough to ensure that most-able children are challenged to reach a higher standard.
- Statutory safeguarding checks are compliant, for example paediatric first aid and staff-to-pupil ratios are suitable for keeping children safe. Children behave well across the provision. They patiently take turns when participating in activities, consider each other's viewpoints and make conscientious decisions about activities that they take part in.
- Relationships between adults and children are positive. Well-structured, established routines and procedures mean that children move happily between activities. They cooperate with each other and behave well.

School details

Unique reference number	121196
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10046529

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	583
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Royle
Headteacher	Alison Clarke
Telephone number	01953 603 405
Website	www.robertkett.net
Email address	mrs.clarke@robertkett.net
Date of previous inspection	19–20 January 2012

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, when the school was a five-form junior school with pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, inclusive, the school has expanded into a primary school. The school is in its final year of this transition to a three-form primary school. This year, for the first time, the school has had pupils in Year 2.
- The school is a considerably larger than most primary schools. It currently has five Year 6 classes, two Year 3, 4 and 5 classes and three Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- There are breakfast- and after-school clubs run by the school.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- All classes were visited by inspectors, some jointly with leaders. The inspection was during the week when Year 6 were taking their national tests.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' books, spoke with pupils and looked at their current work to find out how well they are learning.
- Inspectors looked at a large sample of pupils' books across a range of subjects to evaluate pupils' learning in English, mathematics and across the wider curriculum. Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading, and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors talked to groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning to find out what it is like to be a pupil at Robert Kett Primary School. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during lunchtime. They attended two assemblies.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy and assistant headteacher, year group leaders, a group of staff, a representative from the local authority and a group of six governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from the 220 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 105 free-text responses. An inspector also had conversations with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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