

Weldon Church of England Primary School

Chapel Road, Weldon, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 3HP

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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

- Until recently, standards, particularly in mathematics, have been too low. Pupils have not made sufficient progress by the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils' attainment has been below that seen nationally, particularly at key stage 2. A legacy of poor teaching has left pupils in Years 5 and 6 with many gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Too few pupils, especially the most able, make sufficient progress to enable them to attain the higher standards.
- The standard of teaching is too variable across the school and is not consistently good enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making sufficient progress in their learning.
- On occasions, pupils lack the confidence to face appropriate demands placed upon them.

The school has the following strengths

- This school is improving rapidly. The executive headteacher has brought a renewed energy in leading staff. She leads with a strong moral purpose.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They capably challenge and support school leaders. Governors have been ably supported by the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET) to bring about significant improvement.
- Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved and that there is greater respect for adults and children than was previously the case. Pupils say that the 'Weldon Way' is making the school even better.
- Pupils are proud of their school and behave well. They are happy to be at school and feel safe.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. This reflects the school's positive ethos and strong sense of values.
- The early years is good. Children settle quickly and are well cared for. Good teaching means that they make good progress from their starting points. Parents and carers speak positively about the induction to the Reception class.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching so that different groups of pupils make stronger progress and reach at least the attainment expected for their age by:
 - improving pupils' reasoning and application skills in mathematics
 - developing reading comprehension skills
 - ensuring that teachers use their knowledge of pupils' earlier learning to meet the needs of pupils more effectively
 - closing gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially in Years 5 and 6
 - providing appropriate challenge for the most able to deepen their understanding
 - supporting disadvantaged pupils so that they make rapid progress.
- Strengthen the personal development and welfare of pupils to enable them to be more confident in their abilities and become more resilient in their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- There is a very positive ethos within the school. The school's values form the basis of the school's vision. These values are lived out and nurtured within the school community.
- Since joining the school, the executive headteacher has brought about rapid improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. As a result of these improvements, pupils are now making better progress than was the case previously. However, these improvements have not yet secured consistently good teaching across the school.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have identified the right priorities for improvement and are putting in place actions to tackle them. These plans have already brought about swift improvement.
- There is strong capacity for further improvement across the school. Senior and middle leaders are increasingly effective in their roles. For example, middle leaders' monitoring is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching.
- There have been significant staffing changes over the last year. These changes have strengthened the resolve to bring about rapid improvement. There is a strong team ethos and staff morale is very positive.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that teachers accurately assess pupils' learning. They have established accurate monitoring systems to review pupils' progress. The improvements to assessment have enabled teachers to target gaps in pupils' learning more effectively.
- Leaders have prioritised improvements in writing. The impact of this can be seen in improved end-of-key-stage-2 outcomes in writing and English grammar, spelling and punctuation in 2018.
- Teachers value the opportunities for professional development. The impact of the training they have received can be seen in the improvements to curriculum planning and improvements in the teaching of writing.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with a focus on improving pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Staff have developed a new curriculum which is proving successful in engaging pupils' interests and meeting their needs.
- Pupils value the opportunities for extra-curricular activities. They particularly enjoy the sporting activities, trips and residential visits.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is a strength of the school. Assemblies on the theme of 'togetherness' reinforce the spiritual, moral and social values of the school. Fundamental British values are developed well through the new curriculum.
- Until recently, the use of the pupil premium funding has not been effective in improving outcomes for eligible pupils. Some disadvantaged pupils are not making rapid enough progress in their learning. Leaders have reviewed how the funding was spent and have revised their plans for its use. There are some early signs that this is beginning to have more impact.

- Leaders have used additional physical education (PE) and sports premium to buy extra resources, train teachers and provide a greater variety of sports for pupils to take part in. Pupils value these extra opportunities.
- Leaders have benefited from strong support from PDET. Regular monitoring, advice and training have brought about significant improvement in the quality of education. The trust has been instrumental in supporting the changes and improvements at the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear vision for the school. They have had a significant effect in bringing about improvements since the school became an academy. They are ambitious for all pupils to receive the best education possible.
- Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They are fully aware of their roles in supporting and holding leaders to account and are increasingly effective in this role. They are confident to ask challenging questions, while balancing the need to be a 'critical friend' to leaders.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They willingly tackle difficult challenges for the benefit of the school community.
- Governors value and act on the support of PDET. They recognise the positive impact of their combined responsibilities to the school community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example they are taught fire, water and online safety
- Overwhelmingly, parents say that their children are happy and feel safe at the school. Pupils say the same and know who to turn to if they have any concerns or worries.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They are also meticulous in maintaining records.
- Any pupils who need additional help receive it swiftly. The pastoral care for these pupils is particularly strong.
- Staff and governors receive regular training and are aware of their responsibilities related to safeguarding. The safeguarding governor visits the school regularly to monitor safeguarding processes.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Poor teaching in the past has left pupils in Years 5 and 6 with significant gaps in their learning. The most able pupils are not reaching the high standards they should.
- There is still much variability in teaching and learning in some classes. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils have fully grasped the learning before moving on to new concepts.

- Teachers' expectations of pupils' learning are improving. Teachers skilfully question and check pupils' learning regularly and respond to misconceptions. Teachers are becoming more confident in adapting work to meet the needs of most pupils.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are now accurate across all year groups. Because of this, they can focus their teaching more precisely on pupils' needs.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge. This complements the new curriculum, which is beginning to interest and engage pupils positively.
- Pupils benefit from the very effective work of teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are skilled in supporting learning. They have a secure understanding of the learning needs of individual pupils and use this to help pupils improve their skills and knowledge.
- Pupils are encouraged to read and they are doing so with improved fluency. They apply their phonics knowledge and skills well to decode unfamiliar words. However, teachers do not consistently develop pupils' reading comprehension well enough.
- Because of carefully targeted staff training, the teaching of writing is improving rapidly. Pupils have increasing opportunities to write at length and understand how to improve their writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils have a positive attitude to learning, which is increasingly having a positive impact on their progress. This is particularly evident in early years and in Years 1 to 4. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have improving attitudes, but are held back by a legacy of low expectations in the past.
- The new curriculum provides good opportunities for personal development. Assemblies challenge pupils to think deeply about their own values and their part in the school community. Pupils understand the importance of respect as a key value of the school community.
- Pastoral care is effective. Staff understand pupils' needs well and provide appropriate care and support. Pupils who need additional help are well supported by the learning mentor.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Overwhelmingly parents and staff say that pupils behave well at school. Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved and that there is greater respect for adults and children.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good. They are calm, orderly and look out for each other. There is a strong emphasis on respect across the school. Pupils are polite and respectful of each other and adults. Pupils convey a strong sense of belonging and are happy to be at school.

- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue at school. They are confident that teachers will deal with any concerns, should bullying occur.
- Attendance is good and has improved in the last year. Pupils are happy at school and value the opportunities presented to them.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although improving, pupils' outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are not good.
- Unvalidated data indicates that standards in writing were much higher in 2018 than in previous years. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in English grammar, punctuation and spelling in 2018 was above the national average.
- For the past few years, attainment at the end of key stage 1 has been largely average. There are indications of an improving picture for pupils currently in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are making good progress. An increasing proportion of these pupils are reaching the higher standards.
- Outcomes in reading are not as strong as in writing. Leaders are taking appropriate actions to raise progress and attainment in reading.
- Standards have improved over the course of last year, particularly in writing. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is not improving quickly enough. Pupils' mathematical reasoning skills are not sufficiently well developed.
- The most able pupils have not been challenged to higher levels and deeper learning. Too few in Years 5 and 6 achieve greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are not catching up quickly enough with their peers. Their progress is not good enough.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding that are in line with or below those typical for their age.
- Because of good teaching, children make good progress. Children whose starting points are well below those of other children of their age are catching up quickly. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development nationally by the end of Reception is improving rapidly.
- Leadership of early years is strong, with high expectations of all children. Staff plan a thoughtful and stimulating curriculum, which is supported by a positive and purposeful environment, both inside and outdoors.
- Children's work in books and displays shows care and pride in their work.
- Staff are responsive to and value professional development opportunities. As a result, better activities are being planned to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills.
- Safeguarding is effective. The provision is welcoming, safe and stimulating. All

mandatory welfare requirements are in place.

- Parents speak very positively about the induction process. They value the play and stay sessions, pre-induction and home visits, as well as the initial open-door approach. Children engage well, settle quickly and are happy to start school.

School details

Unique reference number	142651
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10057631

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Margaret Holman
Executive Headteacher	Kirstin Howarth
Telephone number	01536 265288
Website	www.weldonprimary.co.uk/
Email address	office@weldonprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school. It became an academy in March 2016.
- The school is part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust. Directors of the trust are the appropriate authority with delegated responsibilities to the local governing body.
- The trust provides support for the school through its regular training and monitoring visits.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is also lower than the

national figure.

- As a Church of England school, the academy received its last Section 48 inspection in March 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons. Senior leaders carried out some observations jointly with inspectors. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books with senior leaders and sampled books in classes.
- Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, other leaders and members of staff, and spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector met four governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke to the representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and pupils around the school. In addition, they evaluated 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 21 free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of 34 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised several documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, improvement plans and school information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors also considered behaviour and attendance information, and policies and procedures relating to SEN, pupil premium funding, PE and sport premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens

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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