

Takeley Primary School

Bennet Canfield, Little Canfield, Dunmow, Essex CM6 1YE

Inspection dates

12–13 September 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite improvements made over recent months, standards at the school are not high enough. Too many pupils make less progress than they should, which limits their achievement.
- Most of the school’s leaders have been appointed very recently. They have not had enough time for their well-thought-through plans to deliver the necessary improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders do not make timely enough checks on the quality of teaching. As a result, weaker teaching limits pupils’ progress.
- Some teachers do not provide activities or support that consistently meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able.
- Too many teachers have expectations of what pupils can achieve that are too low. Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils sufficiently in lessons, so too many pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, including in the early years.
- Teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to develop subject-specific knowledge and skills in the wider curriculum.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress.
- The extent to which governors monitor the effectiveness of different aspects of the school’s work is too variable.
- Children in the early years do not make good progress because teaching is too inconsistent.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders know what they need to do to make the school better. Working with energy and determination, they are starting to make the necessary changes.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of effective teaching, pupils make greater progress in upper key stage 2 than in other areas of the school. This is helping to compensate for previous gaps in their learning.
- Pupils’ personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. They enjoy and take pride in their school and their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - leaders at all levels ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of all pupils
 - governors monitoring standards across the whole curriculum and holding leaders to account for the progress of all groups of pupils, including those that fall behind
 - leaders making frequent checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and taking timely action when standards are not high enough.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that pupils make good progress and attain highly, by:
 - teachers providing consistent and effective support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including carefully following the requirements on education, health and care (EHC) plans
 - teachers planning and delivering sequences of learning that meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able, building on what they have already learned
 - pupils learning subject-specific knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum, including English and mathematics, so that increasing proportions of pupils reach the expected or higher standards at the end of key stage 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has developed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses since his appointment in September 2017. Other leaders, appointed very recently, have created coherent improvement plans but have had too little time to implement these.
- Leaders recognise that they need to raise teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve but they have not yet been able to improve this aspect of the school.
- Leaders have identified that, other than in English and mathematics, pupils' learning over time has not developed the knowledge and skills they will need to make a strong start to secondary school. Leaders are making the required changes to the curriculum but it is too soon to determine the impact of these on pupils' progress.
- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too infrequent. As a result, poor-quality teaching is not identified swiftly and is left to continue for too long. This leads to groups of pupils not making consistently good progress.
- Leaders do not monitor with enough precision the teaching of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This means that teachers do not always provide the required support for these pupils and, as a result, these pupils make inconsistent progress over time.
- While many parents and carers are positive about improvements over the past 12 months, a significant minority of parents raised concerns about poor communication between home and school. These parents are concerned that they do not have enough information about what happens during school, how well their children are progressing and how they can help their children make better progress.
- Leaders effectively use pupil premium funding for disadvantaged groups across the school to support strong learning for these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils have not progressed as well in science and other foundation subjects because of less-effective teaching and support in these areas.
- The school has a comprehensive staff training plan that has started to have some positive impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in some classes. For example, recent training in new approaches to the teaching of mathematics has made a positive impact on the quality of learning. The impact of this training has not yet led to consistent improvements across the school.
- Leaders use the additional physical education (PE) and sport premium funding well. They carefully monitor the impact of this funding and make necessary changes when needs arise. The proportion of pupils participating in sport is high. Pupils of all ages and abilities take part in a range of competitive sports. Leaders' success with the PE and sport premium funding has earned the school the gold award for the national School Games Mark.
- The schools within the trust work well together. Leaders within trust schools hold each other accountable for their work and share expertise. Some new leaders who started at

the school this year have already benefited from working alongside leaders at other schools. New ideas from trust schools have positively contributed towards leaders' improvement plans.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Governors aspire to reach the highest educational standards for pupils at the school. In partnership with the trust, they have set a clear vision for the school and have appointed enthusiastic leaders who know what needs to be done to secure the necessary improvements.
- Governors share with leaders an accurate understanding of many of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They contribute effectively towards leaders' comprehensive improvement plans.
- Although the governing body tracks the progress of pupils in the core subjects, records indicate that they do not check carefully enough the progress made by those pupils who fall behind.
- The governing body has not monitored the quality of pupils' progress across the wider curriculum. Therefore, governors have not held leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes in foundation subjects.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's recruitment checks on staff are compliant with current regulations to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that staff receive up-to-date training in the safeguarding of children, and this training is put into practice across the school. All members of staff share the same commitment towards the safety of children. Staff look for signs of abuse and neglect and act quickly and effectively if they are concerned about a pupil.
- Records regarding vulnerable pupils and their families are well kept. The inclusion team at the school works well with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families swiftly receive the support they need.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through a variety of curriculum opportunities. They know how to stay safe outside of school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Some teachers have insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, many activities provided for pupils are too easy and do not provide them with enough opportunities to think deeply.
- Too many teachers do not consistently plan and deliver sequences of activities that meet the needs of all pupils. When pupils need harder tasks, teachers do not routinely provide new activities for pupils to take the next steps in their learning. Too often,

small groups of pupils finish work without any opportunity to make further progress.

- Pupils often continue to make the same mistakes because, too often, teachers do not help them to correct their thinking when they make mistakes. Many pupils continue to make basic spelling errors because teachers do not insist that they correct them.
- Too often, teachers do not plan activities that enable pupils to revisit their previous learning and to make use of what they already know when they move on to a new task or topic. For example, older pupils are not taught to use the phonics they learned in key stage 1 and this limits their progress in reading and spelling in key stage 2.
- In mathematics, teachers do not provide enough opportunities across the school for pupils to develop reasoning skills and apply their mathematical skills to real-world situations. Pupils' inconsistent achievement in mathematics across the school reflects the variation in the effectiveness of mathematics teaching.
- In foundation subjects such as history, science and art, teachers do not have a common understanding of what they expect pupils to learn over time. Teachers teach pupils many facts within foundation subjects but do not consistently teach the unique skills and understanding for each subject. For example, pupils do not have enough regular opportunities to work and think as scientists, even though they have memorised scientific facts.
- Teachers do not have a common approach to assess how well pupils are learning. When planning activities across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics, teachers do not regularly apply what they know about pupils' knowledge and skills when planning sequences of learning. This limits the progress pupils make in their learning.
- Teachers do not consistently provide tasks that match the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Pupils' work in books shows that when teachers use the strategies agreed in EHC plans, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress.
- School leaders are aware that they need to create more effective ways of communicating with parents in relation to how well pupils are doing in school. Many parents have reported on Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, that the school's communication is not yet effective. Only half of parents agreed with the statement 'I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress.'
- Teachers of older pupils have consistently high expectations and provide challenging activities that require their pupils to think deeply. Consequently, pupils in the older years progress better in their learning than those in other years.
- Teachers and pupils have positive relationships. The universally warm approach teachers have towards pupils leads to their positive attitudes to learning.
- Within the team of teachers, there is strong capacity to share effective teaching practices and improve teaching, learning and assessment quickly. Teachers are developing new strategies and these are starting to improve pupils' learning.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils at Takeley Primary School are confident and take pride in their learning and their school. Many pupils were keen to show their achievements to inspectors and spoke well about the school.
- Leaders have successfully created a school culture where pupils respect each other's differences. Pupils talk about and demonstrate well fundamental British values such as tolerance and mutual respect. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and how to deal with it. Pupils explained to inspectors that, on the rare occasions when bullying happens, teachers act swiftly and effectively to ensure that it does not continue.
- Leaders have put in place strong support teams that successfully help pupils and their families during difficult times. When asked, through Ofsted's pupils' survey and during conversations with inspectors, most pupils explained that there is an adult at school they can go to when something is worrying them.
- Lunchtime supervisors understand the needs of pupils well and provide activities that pupils enjoy. Older pupils take pride in serving as play leaders alongside lunchtime supervisors. These older pupils teach younger pupils how to have fun and play with kindness.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep themselves safe. Leaders have introduced an effective approach to teaching online safety. Pupils show a detailed understanding of online risks and what to do to stay safe, including when playing video games.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Because of the effective work of leaders over the last 12 months, behaviour has improved dramatically. Many parents and pupils reported to inspectors that behaviour is much better now, and this reflects the good behaviour inspectors found around the school.
- Leaders have created a positive ethos that permeates the school. Adults and older pupils are positive role models for younger members of the community. Younger pupils, including children in Reception, quickly learn the school's values and live up to them.
- Pupils enjoy learning together during lessons and have fun playing together when on the playground. Pupils show respect and care for each other and naturally look after vulnerable pupils in and out of lessons.
- Pupils attend school regularly and are typically on time to lessons. Leaders have successfully reduced the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent.

- Teachers deal with the rare occurrences of poor behaviour effectively to ensure that it does not continue or get worse. The number of exclusions at the school is very low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils at key stage 2 who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was below the national average. The proportion of pupils at key stage 2 who reached the expected or higher standard in reading and mathematics was also low. Provisional results for 2018 show improvements in the school's key stage 2 results but the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined continues to be below the national average.
- The most able pupils do not consistently make the progress or attain the results of which they are capable. Teachers do not provide these pupils, and many middle-ability pupils, with enough opportunities to practise reasoning or to apply what they know in mathematics to real-world problems. As a result, too few pupils achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check has varied over the last two years. Provisional results show a dip to below the national average in 2018.
- School information and work in books show that pupils make greater progress towards the end of key stage 2. This is largely due to teachers having higher expectations and providing opportunities that require deeper thinking from older pupils. Teachers' lower expectations of younger pupils limit what they can achieve by the end of key stage 2. This is because teachers of older pupils spend too much time having to fill the gaps in pupils' learning, rather than enriching and deepening pupils' learning.
- Pupils' progress in science and other foundation subjects is too uneven across the school. Work in books and school information show too many pupils achieving below what they should be. This is because of inconsistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. In 2018, the proportion of pupils in key stage 2 who achieved the expected standard in science was below the national average.
- Progress for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent. In classes where teachers provide support that is targeted at the specific needs of the pupils, they achieve well. In other areas, activities and support are not appropriate, so pupils do not learn as well as they could.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers provide high-quality teaching and support for disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional results for 2018 show that the proportions of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 who reached the expected and higher standards in those subjects were above national averages. Similarly, in 2017, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 who reached the expected and greater-depth standards were also above national averages. Provisional results reflect a similarly positive trend in key stage 1 in 2018.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- From broadly typical starting points on entry to Reception, children make inconsistent progress. This is due to low expectations in teaching, along with insufficient resources to support children's learning. The outdoor provision, for example, is not of a good enough standard. As a result, children are not well supported across the whole curriculum.
- Teaching is improving, although it is not yet consistently good. Too often, activities limit the children from taking the next steps in their learning. This stops children from achieving what they are capable of.
- The teaching of early reading and mathematics skills is developing but is still not good. Children are starting to use reading books daily, which is beginning to improve the quality of learning.
- Children behave well. They enjoy working together in teams to complete tasks set by teachers. Inspectors watched children having fun helping each other put away toys and equipment after teachers asked them to tidy up before having a snack. Children move calmly and purposefully around the classrooms and other areas of the school.
- Leaders have accurately identified that the quality of early years provision is not yet good enough. Plans and extra spending on the early years are starting to make positive changes on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders have ensured that children are safe and well cared for in the early years.

School details

Unique reference number	142049
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10053427

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	392
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Diane Hancock
Headteacher	Andy Cosslett
Telephone number	01279 870 541
Website	www.takeley-pri.essex.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@takeley-pri.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- Takeley Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 January 2016. When its predecessor school, Takeley Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- Takeley Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2017.
- The senior leadership team is made up of two assistant headteachers and the headteacher. The chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust oversees the work of the senior leadership team.
- The local governing body is made up of eight governors. The local governing body report to the trustees.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not, or believed not to be, English is lower than the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who are supported for SEN and/or disabilities is below average, and the proportion of pupils who have an EHC plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, the CEO of the trust and senior and middle leaders. He also held a meeting with the chair and the rest of the governing body.
- The inspection team observed lessons across the school, and a scrutiny of pupils' books was carried out jointly by inspectors and a member of the senior leadership team. An inspector listened to a few pupils in Years 3 and 5 read.
- The lead inspector and another inspector spoke with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Inspectors also analysed responses from 29 parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 19 free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered 20 responses to the staff questionnaire and responses from 50 pupils who took part in the pupil survey. They spoke to teachers, support staff and pupils throughout the course of the inspection.
- The inspection team took into account a wide range of information, including the school's website, development plan, assessment information from its pupil tracking system and leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, as well as governing body minutes and information from the trust.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jason Howard	Her Majesty's Inspector
Angela Savill	Ofsted 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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