

# Sporle Church of England Primary Academy

82 the Street, Sporle, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2DR

## Inspection dates

26–27 September 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, while improving, has until recently been variable. Teachers have not provided sufficient support or challenge for some pupils in their classes.
- Pupils' progress is uneven because teaching sometimes does not meet the needs of pupils in mixed-aged classes.
- Pupils' outcomes for 2018 remain below those found nationally in writing in Year 2 and in reading and mathematics in Year 6. Pupils' progress in Year 6 was also below that found nationally.
- Some curriculum subjects, such as geography and history, are not planned well enough to ensure that teachers can check pupils' progress in all subjects.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.
- Attendance is below that found nationally, and some pupils are absent too frequently.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders at all levels have worked successfully together to improve the ethos of the school. They have ensured that behaviour is now good and that pupils have more positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders' actions to improve teaching have ensured that pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, while not consistently good, is improving.
- Middle leaders know the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, and they implement plans for improvement, which are proving effective.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is strong, enabling most of these pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well. The way staff care for pupils is a strength of the school.
- Parents have confidence in the school. Leaders have provided lots of information to parents so that they understand the changes that have taken place. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - teachers use time in lessons effectively in order to maximise learning and move learning on more rapidly when pupils are ready for this
  - tasks are well matched to pupils' needs in mixed-aged classes
  - adults use assessment within lessons to identify and address pupils' misconceptions more swiftly.
- Improve pupils' outcomes so that they are better prepared for the next stage of education by ensuring that:
  - staff know the standard expected for each year group in different subjects in order to plan tasks which enable pupils to reach these standards
  - the curriculum is more finely tuned to ensure pupils' progression in knowledge and understanding
  - staff provide better opportunities to develop pupils' cultural understanding
  - pupils' attendance continues to improve overall, and especially for those pupils who are absent too frequently and, consequently, do not make good progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The predecessor school was judged inadequate in 2015. Since then, there have been a large number of staffing and structural changes which have benefited the school. This includes the appointment of the current executive headteacher and the school joining a multi-academy trust in 2016. Since then, governors and trustees have worked effectively together to address many of the predecessor school's weaknesses.
- The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very well. They judiciously plan their time across the three schools in the federation so that they spend time where it is needed and modify their schedule when this is needed. They have ensured that pupils' progress is improving over time as the quality of teaching and learning improves. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils who make good progress because leaders ensure that support for them is well matched to their needs.
- Leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour. They have introduced a consistent system for reporting incidents, with consequences for poor behaviour which are known and understood by pupils, staff and parents. As a result, behaviour at the school is much improved.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and where improvements are still needed. They plan carefully for improvements and ensure that plans are implemented and evaluated. One example of this was the plan to improve handwriting. This has had a significantly positive effect on pupils' written presentation, and pupils show pride in their written work.
- Leaders, together with the academy trust, have developed middle leaders' skills. Consequently, leaders responsible for English and mathematics now have an accurate understanding of what is working well and where further improvements are needed.
- Leaders have worked with parents to establish confidence in the school, which has not been the case in the past. Leaders help parents understand how they can help their child learn, for example by holding parent cafes and workshops to explain how phonics is taught in school. Consequently, parents trust leaders and praise the school and its staff. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire said that they would recommend the school to another parent. Typical of the comments of many parents who responded was one parent who said: 'My son is always happy to go to school. He speaks well of his teachers and other school staff and is more than happy to attend every day. This makes me feel that he is well looked after... The school has improved immensely.'
- Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively. They know all pupils and can identify and overcome barriers to their learning through the support provided. This enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve well.
- Leaders have addressed many of the weaknesses in teaching, identified in the predecessor school's inspection, through staff training and carrying out rigorous checks on teaching. However, changes in staffing and class organisation mean that teaching has not been consistently good and, as a result, pupils' progress is uneven. Leaders

have implemented sensible plans to improve teaching further, but it is too early to judge the impact of this.

- Leaders ensure that pupils have a broad curriculum. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a wide range of trips, carefully planned to link to topics being studied. Opportunities to take part in sports events are supported through the effective use of sports premium funding. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently well planned to ensure that teachers can check pupils' progress in all subjects. Plans to develop the curriculum further are not yet fully implemented.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are promoted well. Pupils learn about values in assembly, and they talk in class about how to treat others and about making good choices. Opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and to learn to share and take turns ensure that pupils develop good social skills. Some opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures include, for example, learning in Year 6 about people around the world who have been displaced. Despite this, pupils spoken to during the inspection did not demonstrate a well-developed cultural understanding. Some pupils are unsure about what is appropriate or inappropriate terminology when talking about people from different backgrounds.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors and trustees work together well and are clear about their respective roles. The systems for governors to hold leaders to account, and for trustees to hold both governors and leaders to account, work well. Governors and trustees provide a good balance of support and challenge for leaders. For example, governors challenged leaders about the progress of pupils in certain year groups.
- Governors and trustees check that funding, including for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, is used effectively. Regular committee meetings look in detail at whether the support given has made a difference to these pupils' progress. For example, governors told the inspector about the difference that emotional support, through counselling, had made to some pupils' readiness to learn. As a result, governors know that these pupils achieve well from their starting points.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have highly robust systems to ensure that pupils are kept safe in school, and they have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They meet all statutory requirements for keeping pupils safe and carry out and record checks on staff carefully. Staff are trained regularly, and this training is effective. Staff know what to look for, and they complete the appropriate forms if they have a concern that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders work together well to ensure that nothing is missed, and they liaise with external agencies to ensure that concerns are followed up.
- Leaders have provided information for parents about how to keep their child safe when online, although they agree that this needs to be revisited regularly with parents. Pupils know about how to stay safe, including when on line, and know what information they should and should not share. Pupils say that school is a safe place, and all parents who

responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agree.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across year groups. As a result, pupils in some year groups do not make as much progress as they are capable of making.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. Sometimes, teachers do not match tasks well enough to the broad range of abilities and ages in their class. Some pupils are given tasks which do not challenge them sufficiently, or they are not given the right support to help them move on in their learning. Teachers do not always move pupils on swiftly enough when they are ready to take on further challenges.
- Occasionally, adults do not pick up on pupils' mistakes or misconceptions during lessons, especially in mathematics. They do not intervene to address gaps in learning swiftly enough within lessons or through additional support. Consequently, pupils' progress is weakened.
- Additional adults often make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils who have SEN. They question pupils and model answers effectively in order to provide sensitive support to pupils. This enables many of these pupils to make good progress from their starting points. Some teaching assistants have weaker subject knowledge, for example of phonics sounds, and so do not model speech as accurately as they should.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other subjects, such as science and history. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their creative writing skills are more limited.
- Teachers plan topics which pupils enjoy, and which enable pupils to learn about different periods of history, famous people and different countries. However, teaching about other cultures and faiths is more limited, and is sometimes not taught in sufficient depth to prepare pupils for the wider world.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, and most say that they enjoy lessons. Pupils listen to their teachers, and they work well together. Increasingly, pupils persevere with tasks when they are more challenging.
- In mathematics, pupils are increasingly given opportunities to develop their reasoning skills and to apply their calculation skills to solving problems.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils have increased, as shown by work in pupils' books. This is particularly evident in pupils' handwriting and presentation, which has improved significantly.
- In some classes, teachers provide a high level of challenge, for example asking pupils to prove a mathematical statement and explain it to others. Teachers provide tasks at different levels, and they encourage pupils to challenge themselves, which pupils are increasingly prepared to do.
- Reading is taught well. Phonics teaching is carefully planned and delivered so that it meets pupils' needs. As a result, pupils in the early years and Years 1 and 2 develop good phonics knowledge, and use this when reading.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well supported at school. They feel safe and said that there is always an adult to help them if they are worried. Pupils know about how to keep themselves safe because this is taught in lessons such as personal, social health and economic education (PSHE) lessons, and in computing when pupils learn about online safety.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils with emotional or mental health issues are supported through a trained counsellor who also works with parents to support them. This has been effective in ensuring that pupils are ready to learn.
- Most pupils know the difference between bullying and an argument, although a few spoken to were still unsure. All pupils said that any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are dealt with effectively by adults. This is also evident in the behaviour records kept by the school.
- Pupils are increasingly prepared to take on more challenging work because leaders and staff have worked with pupils to develop their confidence and resilience. However, some pupils are reluctant to engage with tasks that they perceive as hard.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is a calm and orderly place. Teachers set out their expectations of pupils' behaviour clearly, for example by reminding pupils to listen to each other and not to call out. Occasionally, pupils lose interest in lessons and are not as focused on their learning as they should be.
- There were a relatively high number of fixed-term exclusions in the spring term of 2017/18. Leaders explained that this was due to the implementation of a more rigorous behaviour system. They were able to demonstrate the positive impact that this had in improving behaviour and the dramatic fall in exclusions that followed.
- Attendance in 2017/18 was slightly lower than that found nationally, and was partly due to the exclusions in the spring term. Leaders monitor all absences carefully. They speak with parents and meet with them to ensure that attendance for their child improves. Consequently, attendance for some pupils who were absent too frequently has improved, but not all. Their attendance remains below that found nationally.

## Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is uneven across year groups and subjects.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading,

writing and mathematics together improved on the previous year but was lower than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing was in line with national average but below that in reading and mathematics. The progress made by these pupils in reading and mathematics was also lower than national figures.

- In Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading was similar to national averages and above in mathematics. However, in writing, fewer pupils reached the expected standard than was the case nationally, and none exceeded this standard.
- Pupils' work from last year and school assessment information show that some pupils made good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics but that progress was uneven. In some year groups, pupils' progress in writing and mathematics was weak and their attainment was also low. As a result, some pupils have started the current academic year well behind their peers.
- In subjects such as science and history, pupils' work is often of a good standard. However, the way that the curriculum is organised means that some teachers are unable to check pupils' progress in knowledge and understanding across these subjects.
- In Year 1, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics assessment was much higher than previously and above national averages. Almost all pupils reached the expected standard. This is because the teaching of phonics is effective.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school is good. These pupils are well supported, and leaders track their progress carefully to check that support is effective. Pupils who have SEN are generally well supported, and most make good progress from their starting points.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children get off to a good start in early years. Those who have recently joined the school at the time of the inspection were already confident in moving about the school, class routines and fetching and using resources. This is because leaders have ensured that there are effective systems to support children's transition into school.
- Staff visit pre-schools and make home visits prior to pupils starting school. Parents are encouraged to come into school, and last year all children came in every morning for a week before the end of the summer term. Consequently, parents said that their children settled quickly and happily into school.
- The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development last year was below that found nationally, due to some pupils' emotional and social needs. However, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard in literacy and mathematics was in line with national figures. Evidence of children's work and adults' assessments show that children made good progress from their starting points. However, no child exceeded the standard expected at the end of the Reception Year.
- Staff provide a good range of tasks and activities for children in the Reception Year, both inside and outside. Staff plan activities carefully, thinking about individual

children's needs. For example, staff planned gardening time for a pupil with limited experience of being outside.

- Staff work with children well in adult-led tasks, and by intervening in children's play. Additional adults provide good support for children. For example, during the inspection, children played skittles outside, and the adult encouraged them to count the skittles at the beginning and then count how many had fallen to develop their mathematical skills.
- Adults balance their time well in this mixed Year 1/Reception class, ensuring that all children have teaching time as well as independent time.
- Reading is taught well. Children are introduced to phonics sounds right from the start. Increasingly, children from the on-site early years provision come to school knowing sounds, and so staff are adapting their teaching to take account of this.
- Staff work well with parents. They provide opportunities for parents to come in to learn about aspects of their child's learning and play alongside them. They use online systems to share information about their child's progress, and parents said that adults are always available to chat at the start or end of the day.



## School details

Unique reference number	142465
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10056467

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike Dwyer
Executive headteacher	Kelly Scott
Telephone number	01760 722 393
Website	<a href="http://www.sporle.norfolk.sch.uk">www.sporle.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@sporle.norfolk.sch.uk">office@sporle.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school became part of the Diocese of Norwich Multi-Academy Trust in February 2016. The school is part of the Nar Federation of Schools with two other small primary schools. The school has a local governing body, which takes responsibility for governance across the federation.
- The school shares its headteacher and deputy headteacher with two other schools within the trust.
- The school is a much smaller school than is found on average nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The

proportion who are supported by an education, health and care plan, or statement of special educational needs, is below average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons in all classes with senior leaders.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books, school assessment information, leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning and a range of school documents.
- The inspector spoke with a small number of parents, took account of 18 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and met with some pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The inspector listened to a small number of pupils read.
- The inspector spoke with four members of the governing body and three members of the academy trust, with senior leaders, subject leaders and staff.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made during staff recruitment.

## Inspection team

Maria Curry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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