

Strand Primary Academy

Strand Street, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN32 7BE

Inspection dates

9–10 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not successfully addressed all areas for improvement. The quality of teaching remains variable.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is overgenerous so priorities are not identified precisely enough.
- Senior leaders have not embedded a curriculum which enables pupils to learn effectively across a range of subjects, including science. Nor does it prepare them consistently well for life in modern Britain.
- Middle leaders are beginning to secure improvements in their areas of responsibility. The effect of their work to date on pupils' outcomes, however, is inconsistent.
- Leaders' approach to the teaching of reading is not consistently embedded. Books are not well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. The frequency with which pupils read varies widely.
- Leaders have not maintained good provision for children in the early years. Children do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high.
- The teaching of phonics does not ensure that pupils are ready for the demands of the reading curriculum in key stages 1 and 2.
- Teachers do not match learning to pupils' needs closely enough. Pupils' progress across subjects is inconsistent. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, in particular, varies.
- Teachers do not deploy additional adults consistently well to support pupils' learning in lessons. Progress for different groups is inconsistent.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have established a warm and welcoming ethos across the school. A happy atmosphere permeates the environment.
- Leaders make good use of external advice and expertise. Positive links have been forged with a wide range of partners. Communication with alternative providers, for example, is effective.
- Pupils behave well and conduct themselves sensibly. They are considerate of each other and respectful of adults.
- Pupils feel safe and know that adults in school will listen to their worries. Parents agree that their children are happy and protected.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in each key stage so that pupils make better progress in their learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information carefully to plan tasks and learning that closely match pupils' needs
 - teachers deploy additional adults consistently well and monitor their effect on pupils' learning and progress meticulously
 - staff are skilled and effective in their teaching and assessment of phonics
 - all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- Further develop and embed a whole-school reading strategy by making sure that:
 - leaders' approach to the teaching of reading, from the early years and through key stages 1 and 2, is understood and applied consistently by all staff
 - staff keep a close eye on pupils' reading choices and the frequency of their reading
 - teachers provide books and reading materials that closely match pupils' phonic knowledge.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, so that:
 - the accuracy of self-evaluation improves, taking into account a wider range of evidence to sharpen plans for improvement
 - the curriculum enables pupils to develop subject-specific knowledge, vocabulary and understanding across a wide range of subjects, including science
 - the curriculum better promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a greater understanding of fundamental British values
 - pupils' attendance improves and fewer pupils are regularly absent from school
 - middle leaders receive the support and development they require to make an effective contribution to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve the effectiveness of the early years by ensuring that opportunities for children to learn and practise their basic skills, especially in reading and mathematics, are frequent and of high quality, both indoors and outside.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not taken swift enough action to address all areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Consequently, teaching, learning and assessment still require improvement and pupils are not making good progress across the curriculum.
- Overgenerous self-evaluation is not supported by a wide enough range of evidence. Leaders and governors place too much attention on the end of key stage outcomes rather than the quality of teaching and learning for different groups of pupils across a wide range of subjects.
- Senior leaders do not check the learning and progress of children in the early years with the same regularity and rigour as in key stages 1 and 2. As a result, there has been a decline in the effectiveness of provision in the early years of which leaders were unaware.
- Senior leaders have not embedded a curriculum that enables pupils to gain the required subject-specific knowledge, skills and vocabulary. Current assessment and planning for subjects beyond English and mathematics lack detail. As a result, pupils' progress and outcomes in subjects such as science remain well below national figures over time.
- The curriculum does not prepare pupils consistently well for the demands of life in Britain today. Pupils cannot talk with knowledge or confidence about faiths, beliefs, relationships or cultures. They have little understanding of extremism and radicalisation, or fundamental British values. This hampers pupils' readiness for later life.
- Senior leaders, governors and trust leaders recognise that curriculum development is a priority for the school. New curriculum plans are under development to address this.
- Leaders make routine checks on the progress of each pupil in key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This is not the case in science or English grammar, punctuation and spelling, where outcomes are weaker. Following these checks, leaders' discussions with teachers do not result in learning that is sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.
- Leaders have not secured an agreed set of expectations to support the assessment of pupils working at greater depth in all year groups. The school's own assessment information does not match with the standards seen in pupils' work.
- Several middle leaders are fairly new to post and some are based at another academy within the trust. Their leadership skills and the frequency with which they check and effect improvements to teaching are variable. Not all leaders have secured sufficient improvements in their area of responsibility over time.
- Leaders' assessment, planning and monitoring of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are of variable quality. Additional funding to support these pupils is not always used to best effect, resulting in inconsistent progress.

- Senior leaders have not embedded an agreed, well-understood approach to teaching reading throughout the school, so inconsistencies remain. For example, there is not a clearly understood system for monitoring pupils' reading choices or records. Not all pupils read to an adult regularly, and reading books are not sharply matched to pupils' phonic knowledge.
- The head of academy and associate executive principal unite in their ambition for the school. This is well communicated and shared by governors and staff at all levels.
- Leaders have correctly identified that training is required for teaching staff and middle leaders. As a result, professional development in phonics has been arranged. Middle leaders have enrolled on nationally recognised development programmes.
- Leaders are starting to make more effective use of the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Plans are carefully considered according to the specific needs of individual pupils. This is beginning to help them catch up but inconsistencies remain in phonics and the early years.
- Leaders spend the physical education and sport premium funding appropriately. It is improving pupils' participation and engagement in sport and developing their physical skills.
- The English leader has successfully led the introduction of the trust's new reading strategy. For pupils in key stages 1 and 2, this is leading to improvements in their language development and reading comprehension.
- Leaders have established effective relationships with alternative providers. They communicate frequently to check on the attendance, progress and general well-being of pupils. As a result, provision meets pupils' individual needs and they remain safe.
- Leaders plan educational visits and invite visitors in to school each half term for every class. This enriches the curriculum and adds invaluable real-life experiences to pupils' learning in the classroom.

Governance of the school

- Records of meetings show appropriate challenge by the members of the academy advisory board (AAB) in relation to the impact of additional funding, end of key stage outcomes, and behaviour and attendance, for example. However, insufficient scrutiny of pupils' progress in other year groups across the curriculum has led to overgenerous self-evaluation by the AAB and the trust.
- The chair of the AAB is passionate, ambitious and committed to improving the life chances of pupils at this academy. He visits regularly and has the professional skills necessary to support further improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A strong safeguarding culture permeates the school and everyone understands their role in keeping children safe.
- Leaders make sure that staff receive regular training and updates, based on local and national events. Staff apply the school's reporting procedures consistently when there

is a concern about a child. Checks on staff and adults who work at the school meet legal requirements.

- The designated safeguarding lead works effectively with external partners and parents and carers to keep children safe from harm. She is persistent and parents value her work.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not use assessment information sharply enough to provide work that is well matched to the different needs of pupils. Lower-ability pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and pupils who speak English as an additional language are over-reliant on adult support to complete work that is often too hard for them. Too often, the most able pupils are not moved on quickly enough to make the progress of which they are capable over time.
- Teachers do not deploy additional adults carefully enough to support different groups during lessons. Too often, additional adults have little impact on pupils' progress and/or learning while the teacher addresses the whole class.
- The checks teachers make on pupils' learning in lessons are not consistently effective. When pupils are finding the activity too hard, adults do not make the necessary adaptations to their teaching or the tasks provided. Pupils who complete their work quickly are not moved on swiftly enough. When this happens, pupils' progress slows and occasionally halts altogether.
- Written and verbal modelling by some teachers is not of a sufficiently high standard. Teachers' explanations lack clarity. As a result, pupils become confused or lose focus, which slows their progress.
- Phonics is not taught well. The quality of provision is inconsistent, resulting in low outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Individual reading books are not matched closely enough to pupils' phonic knowledge. This limits their enjoyment and success. The extent to which pupils read with adults, at school and at home, is variable. Weaknesses in pupils' decoding skills and a lack of knowledge about punctuation hinder fluency and understanding.
- Teachers are using the trust's reading strategy to expose pupils to high-quality texts. This is supporting their language and vocabulary development, especially in key stage 2. As a result, pupils' written responses to comprehension questions are starting to improve. However, this remains inconsistent, especially for younger pupils with weaker reading skills.
- Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write in a range of genres and for different purposes. This is developing pupils' understanding of different types of writing. However, pupils throughout the school are not acquiring strong English grammar, punctuation and spelling knowledge through a carefully planned sequence of work.
- The quality of teaching in other subjects, such as science and religious education, is not consistently good. As a result, pupils do not have the required knowledge, skills and understanding in a broad range of curriculum subjects.

- In mathematics, pupils enjoy regular opportunities to practise their basic skills and, increasingly, use these to solve problems. Most-able pupils are starting to respond positively to the introduction of 'gold challenges' to extend their thinking and develop their problem-solving skills. This is not, however, consistent practice throughout the school. Sometimes, adults do not model mathematical vocabulary effectively, which hinders pupils' ability to explain their reasoning clearly.
- Leaders have established clear expectations about the presentation of pupils' work, which has improved this term. However, the quality of pupils' handwriting is inconsistent and teachers do not expect enough of the most able pupils in relation to this.
- Teachers and staff across the key stages have strong relationships with pupils. These foster positive attitudes and pupils feel encouraged. Pupils speak positively about their teachers and say that they enjoy their learning.
- Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and join in enthusiastically when asked questions. They are keen and eager to please, and want to do their best.
- Teachers provide pupils with enriched experiences, which allow them to learn in meaningful ways. For example, pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class recalled their recent visit to the Hull Museum with enthusiasm, remembering a range of facts they had learned there.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders have not developed and embedded a curriculum that secures pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development well enough to ensure that they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils have limited knowledge about different faiths and cultures. This hinders their ability to understand, tolerate and respect the views and beliefs of those whose experiences may differ from their own.
- Too often, pupils' attention drifts in lessons and their progress falters. Their understanding of how to be successful in learning is not embedded. Leaders are currently taking action to develop pupils' resilience and attitudes to learning. Some early successes are evident, particularly in key stage 2.
- Not all adults communicate, interact and work effectively with pupils who speak English as an additional language. The effect on their personal development is variable.
- Leaders make regular checks on the social and emotional development of pupils attending alternative provision. These pupils make good progress as a result of effective communication with providers and parents.
- Pupils have learned about different kinds of bullying, including cyber bullying. A small minority have experienced bullying but know what to do and who to go to in school.

- Pupils' moral development is embedded within the ethos of the school. They know right from wrong and understand the consequences of their behaviour and actions.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and they have a secure understanding about how to keep themselves safe online. They can talk about how the school has helped them to learn how to keep themselves safe, such as stranger danger, 'Bikeability' and road sense.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- School leaders have maintained high expectations of behaviour. The vast majority of school staff consistently model good manners. As a result, pupils are considerate, respectful and courteous to each other and adults alike.
- Leaders have established a successful behaviour policy. In lessons, staff use positive praise and agreed consequences to reinforce their expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers' strategies work well, contributing effectively to the good conduct seen in and around the school.
- Pupils move around the school in a sensible and orderly manner. They hold doors open and acknowledge each other's kind actions.
- Parents appreciate the changes to procedures at the start of the school day and say that these have helped them to manage the behaviour of their children.
- Leaders use a wide range of strategies in an attempt to improve pupils' attendance. Helpful website information is available to parents, making it clear how important good attendance is for pupils' future successes and well-being. However, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is too high and overall attendance remains lower than national figures over time.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making consistently good progress in their learning. This is due to inconsistencies in the quality of leadership, teaching and assessment that exist across subjects and between year groups.
- Over time, pupils' progress has been inconsistent, resulting in low attainment. Too few pupils reach the higher standard by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment remains below national figures and is not improving in writing and mathematics. In these subjects, too few reach the expected standard.
- Attainment in phonics has been variable over time. The proportion reaching the expected standard remains below national figures by the end of Years 1 and 2. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils remains especially low.
- There is a discrepancy between test information and teachers' own assessment of pupils' attainment. An inconsistent picture of pupils' outcomes is replicated through pupils' books across the curriculum.

- Science books and the school's own assessment information show that that pupils are not making good progress or attaining as well as they should, from their different starting points.
- Reading records and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils do not read to an adult as regularly as they should in school.
- The work in pupils' writing and mathematics books demonstrates variable progress for different groups of pupils. When teachers ask pupils to complete work that does not meet their needs, progress slows. For some, work is too hard and for others, too easy. When pupils receive precisely matched work, they make better progress. This is not, however, a consistent practice.
- Provisional results for 2018 indicate an improvement in pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 has risen.
- The proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is higher than the national average. This group of pupils is starting to make faster progress, which is improving their attainment. However, leaders recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that these improvements are sustained and consistent so that remaining attainment gaps diminish further, especially in the early years and in phonics.
- Evidence in reading journals and pupils' books shows an improvement in the quality of pupils' written responses when engaged in reading comprehension tasks.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children start in the early years with knowledge and abilities that are lower than those typical for their age. Over time, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception has been broadly in line with the national average. However, current children are making inconsistent progress from their different starting points due to the variable quality of teaching and assessment. Children's progress in reading and mathematics, in particular, is inconsistent.
- Teachers are not providing sufficient opportunities, both indoors and outside, for children to develop their basic skills. This results in variable rates of progress, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that children's reading skills develop quickly. Children do not read regularly to an adult in school, nor do they read books that are matched to the sounds they know or are learning. Leaders have not embedded an approach to reading that dovetails well with that in key stages 1 and 2. As a result, children are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- The early years leader does not have sharply focused plans for the spending of the early years pupil premium funding. Consequently, children from disadvantaged backgrounds do not make sufficient progress across the early years. Too few disadvantaged children achieve a good level of development and are ill-prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders have not paid enough attention to the needs and requirements for two-year-olds attending the nursery in the term before their third birthday. For example, planned

arrangements and adaptations to provision for those who may need a rest, or a place to sleep, are lacking.

- Children's play sometimes leads to undesirable behaviour or conflict. Occasionally, this goes unnoticed and, as a result, children do not receive timely intervention to help them learn how to resolve their problems.
- Leaders have successfully implemented an online system for gathering and sharing information with parents. Parents use this to contribute to assessment information and check their children's progress. Parents told inspectors that they were very happy with the provision in the early years and relationships with the school staff are strong.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and welfare requirements are met. Staff have received appropriate training and the environment is safe and secure.

School details

Unique reference number	138866
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10048292

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Mark Rushby
Head of academy	Miss Catherine Davenport
Telephone number	01472 354 605
Website	www.strandpa.org.uk
Email address	info@strandpa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 June–1 July 2016

Information about this school

- Strand Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is part of the Delta Academies Trust. Responsibilities for scrutinising the work of the school are delegated to the AAB by the Delta board of directors.
- The academy uses two alternative providers: MySpace and Phoenix House.
- Nursery provision caters for up to four children during the term before their third birthday.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium additional funding is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across all classes, many of which were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, pupils and parents.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the AAB and a representative from the trust.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised across a range of subjects throughout the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about their books.
- Information from the school website was taken into account.
- Responses from staff, pupil and parent surveys were considered.
- Inspectors also reviewed a wide range of information, including the school's own self-evaluation summary, improvement plans, monitoring records of teaching and learning, assessment data, plans for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, attendance data, policies and safeguarding records.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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