

Moorlands Church of England Primary Academy

Moorland Way, Belton, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 9PA

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have established a culture of high expectations, both of pupils and of teachers. They have secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which is now good.
- The Diocese of Norfolk Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) provides effective support. Leaders and governors have benefited from the support and challenge provided, which has ensured that they focus on the right priorities.
- Pupils currently in the school, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make strong progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for learning in a range of subjects. It motivates and interests pupils, and develops positive attitudes to learning.
- The early years provision is good. Children make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for learning in key stage 1.
- Teachers share and understand the school's core values. They take every opportunity to refer to these values and support pupils' personal development well.
- Pupils' behaviour is improving. There is a small group of pupils whose behaviour does not meet the high standards expected, which has resulted in high levels of exclusion.
- Absence has been consistently above the national average for several years. The proportion of pupils with high levels of absence has also been too high. Leaders' actions are resulting in improvements for current pupils, but there is a small core of pupils whose absence remains too high.
- A small minority of teachers do not routinely use assessment information to plan learning activities that provide appropriate support and challenge for pupils of different abilities.
- On occasion, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop mathematical reasoning, broaden their vocabulary or improve their spelling. This is particularly true for some pupils, including the most able, in key stage 2.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, they do not evaluate all their actions with equal precision to determine the difference that they are making.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' behaviour and attendance by:
 - reducing further the incidents that lead to fixed-period exclusions by improving the behaviour of a small core of pupils
 - further reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school so that absence and persistent absence are at least in line with the national averages for all pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further so that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in key stage 2, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide pupils, particularly the most able, with more opportunities to develop and use their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - support all pupils to widen their vocabulary and improve their spelling
 - use assessment information to plan activities that routinely provide all pupils with appropriate challenge.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders fully evaluate all their actions and precisely measure their impact on school improvement priorities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders work effectively as a team. They share the headteacher's vision for the school. Teachers also understand the school's aims and priorities for improvement. Both teachers and pupils have risen to the challenge of leaders' high expectations. As a result, the quality of education has improved.
- Leaders accurately identify priorities for improvement and put in place appropriate actions to achieve them. For example, they have worked relentlessly to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school. Leaders have used opportunities provided by the trust to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments.
- Leaders ensure that teachers have opportunities for professional development and to share with one another what works well. Teachers, including those new to the profession, are positive about how leaders help them to develop their practice and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- There has been a sharp focus on improving pupils' outcomes. For example, leaders have raised the profile of reading in the school and focused on developing pupils' skills of comprehension, inference and retrieval, as well as their understanding of letters and the sounds that they make. The library has been redeveloped and pupils have access to high-quality texts to read. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and this is having a positive impact on achievement.
- Leaders have also identified the aspects of teaching in writing and mathematics that need to improve, particularly for pupils in key stage 2. Leaders have ensured that teachers have received training and support to put in place the chosen approaches to teaching writing and mathematics. These actions are helping to raise standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, leaders recognise there is still work to do to accelerate rates of progress further, particularly in key stage 2, and they have actions in place to achieve this.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to a broad curriculum. They have chosen to use a mixture of themes and teaching subjects separately. Pupils are interested and motivated by the themes chosen. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their work on the Iron Age. They demonstrated good gains in their historical knowledge and proudly showed inspectors their artwork. Themes also include trips to places of interest or visits from outside speakers to make learning relevant and provide further interest.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum, supplemented by a programme of assemblies, supports pupils well in understanding the beliefs and cultures of others and contributes strongly to pupils' moral education. Teachers also make effective use of opportunities that arise to discuss the school's core values of responsibility, resilience, honesty, compassion, respect and belief during lessons. As a result, the curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) leads the provision for pupils with SEND effectively. She ensures that pupils' barriers to learning are identified accurately and monitors pupils' progress and attendance to evaluate the effectiveness of

provision. As a result, most pupils with SEND benefit from the help provided and make strong progress from their starting points. However, leaders, have not fully evaluated the impact that recent changes have had on the provision for pupils with SEND or determined whether further changes are needed.

- Leaders ensure that the physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. The funding has been used to provide some specialist coaching and increase teachers' confidence to teach PE. Inspectors observed effective PE teaching that was helping pupils to develop their confidence and skills.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were positive about the work of the school. Many recognise the improvements that school leaders have made. One parent commented that the school had 'improved out of all recognition' under the current leadership and another stated, 'The big changes that were needed have happened and the change is fantastic.'
- A minority of parents who responded to Parent View expressed negative views of the school. The school's own recent survey of parents indicates a more positive picture. Leaders have increased the ways in which they communicate with parents, as they know that they still need to change some parents' perceptions of the school.
- The school's behaviour and rewards policy was revised for the start of the current academic year. This builds upon successful work to improve pupils' behaviour in the school, including those pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Leaders have reduced the number of pupils who are excluded from school for fixed periods of time. However, there remains a small core of pupils whose behaviour needs to improve. Leaders are making use of links with schools with similar challenges to find further strategies to help these pupils manage their behaviour.
- Leaders use the pupil premium appropriately to help pupils to overcome barriers to learning. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school typically make strong progress from their starting points. There have also been some improvements in the attendance and behaviour of individual disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have not, however, precisely analysed which of their actions have been most effective.
- There are established systems for monitoring the quality of provision. Leaders' regular checks on the work of the school mean that they identify the right priorities for improvement. However, leaders do not precisely identify the impact that all of their actions have on bringing about improvement.

Governance of the school

- DNEAT provides a range of support to the school. This includes regular visits from the Academy Group Executive Principal (AGEP), who provides support and challenge to senior leaders. The trust regularly monitors the work of the school and holds leaders and governors to account through termly academy review meetings. Trust representatives have an accurate view of how the school has improved and what still needs to be done to maintain the momentum of change for the better. The trust has provided professional development for teachers to improve the quality of teaching in the school and improve the accuracy of teachers' assessments.
- With the benefit of support from the trust, the local governing body (LGB) has become increasingly effective since the previous inspection. Members of the LGB have an

accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are involved in school self-evaluation and monitor closely leaders' progress towards improvement targets, ensuring that leaders focus on the right things to work towards the aims of the trust.

- Members of the LGB use opportunities provided by the trust and external organisations to develop their knowledge and skills so that they remain up to date regarding developments in education. They have a clear understanding of the responsibilities that have been delegated to them by the trust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders' checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work with children and young people are thorough. The record of these checks is accurately maintained and regularly reviewed by the nominated members of the LGB and the trust.
- Adults receive regular training and updates to ensure that they can keep pupils safe from harm. Adults have a very good understanding of the policies and procedures that are in place, which reflect the most recent guidance, and the risks that pupils face. As a result, adults are confident to report any concerns that they have. The designated safeguarding leader ensures that, when necessary, referrals to other agencies are made promptly. This ensures that children and their families quickly receive any help that they need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders' expectations of teachers are clear. Leaders' chosen strategies and approaches to teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. This is evident in the strong and improved progress that most current pupils are making.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and have an accurate view of its strengths and what needs to improve. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in science is improving because teachers have chosen to engage with a development programme provided by an external provider. Pupils are learning factual knowledge and how to develop and use their investigative skills.
- Teachers have established positive learning environments and the very large majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers use themes effectively to capture pupils' interest and engage them in learning in subjects other than English and mathematics. They celebrate pupils' successful learning through high-quality displays of work.
- Teachers make good use of opportunities to support pupils' personal development when they arise. For example, pupils are supported to develop empathy and understand how others may feel. This was seen in sensitive pieces of writing about refugees and about how members of Captain Scott's Antarctic expedition would have felt on their journey to the South Pole.
- Reading is taught effectively across the school. Teachers model how to identify features of different texts and support pupils well in developing the skills they need to retrieve information and gain a deeper understanding of what they are reading. Pupils

have regular opportunities to read in school and at home. Reading for pleasure is encouraged. As a result, pupils enjoy reading and outcomes in reading are improving strongly.

- The teaching of phonics is systematic and consistently effective. The phonics leader uses assessment information well to ensure that pupils are in groups that enable them to progress at a pace that is right for them. Teachers identify those pupils who need additional support and make sure that they receive the help that they need, including those pupils who do not achieve the expected standard by the end of key stage 1. As a result, pupils are confident to apply their phonics skills when reading and in their writing.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have developed their questioning skills, which are typically used very well to check and probe pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants provide effective support to the pupils that they work with. This contributes positively to the strong and improving progress of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school.
- Teachers follow a common approach to the teaching of writing. Pupils are well supported through a wide variety of opportunities to write for different purposes. They use and practise their writing skills in subjects other than English. This is supporting pupils currently in the school to make strong progress in the structure and content of their written work. The English leader has provided high-quality training and support to his colleagues to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of writing. However, a few teachers still do not consistently support pupils to use a wider range of vocabulary or help them to improve their spelling.
- Teachers have been successful in developing pupils' fluency and confidence in mathematics. Pupils have daily opportunities to practise and develop knowledge, skills and understanding through 'fluent in five'. Pupils also use and apply their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. For example, pupils were seen using their knowledge of angles in their artwork inspired by Kandinsky. Most teachers also support pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. However, a minority of teachers do not yet do so routinely when opportunities arise, particularly for the most able pupils.
- The great majority of teachers use their knowledge of pupils and assessment information to plan sequences of learning and activities that are interesting and meet pupils' different needs. This means barriers to learning are accurately identified and these teachers provide activities that support pupils' learning and progress effectively, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. However, a small number of teachers do not do this consistently. As a result, their activities do not routinely provide appropriate challenge and support for the pupils in their classes. Pupils in these classes do not make as consistently strong progress as others in the school because they sometimes find the tasks too easy or too hard.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a kind and caring ethos that reflects the school's core values. Pupils are taught

and encouraged to make the right choices, even when the right path is not the easiest one to follow. Pupils are very tolerant and understanding of difference. They know that everyone should be treated equally and why they should understand and respect the beliefs and views of others.

- Teachers and leaders know pupils well. Pastoral care is given a high priority and leaders seek help for those pupils who need it. They are aware of a growing need to provide support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health and are making good use of their links to local organisations to increase the support that they can give.
- The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Pupils say that they feel safe in and around the school. The very large majority of parents who responded to Parent View, those who responded to the school's own survey, and those spoken to by inspectors, said that their children are happy at school, safe and are well looked after.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in all its different forms and of the harm that it causes. Almost all pupils say that when bullying occurs, teachers deal with it well and resolve problems. When bullying does reoccur leaders apply the school's sanctions appropriately, but also seek support to address the bullying behaviour of the pupil concerned.
- Pupils have opportunities to hold positions of responsibility through being elected as members of the school or class council. This also supports pupils' understanding of the democratic process. The school council has made decisions about how to spend money raised by the school and which charities to support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are typically polite and respectful to one another and to adults. They generally behave well in lessons and in less structured parts of the day, such as playtime and lunchtime.
- Even the youngest children are made aware of what adults expect and almost always respond well to adults' direction. The very large majority of pupils understand and respond well to the school's behaviour and reward system. There are examples of where support provided by the school has resulted in significant improvements in behaviour for individual pupils. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils who are excluded from school temporarily.
- There remains a small core of pupils whose challenging behaviour does not meet the school's high expectations. Other pupils understand that these pupils have difficulties in managing their behaviour and know that teachers are trying all that they can to help these pupils improve their behaviour. However, leaders acknowledge that this small group of pupils require further support to manage their own behaviour, so that all pupils meet the high standards expected.
- Systems to monitor and follow up absence have been tightened. This has had a positive impact on improving attendance this year, both overall and for some pupils with previously high rates of absence. High and improved attendance rates are celebrated and rewarded. However, there are still some pupils who are absent from

school too frequently and this results in overall absence rates still being too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Achievement for pupils at the end of key stage 2 has increased since the previous inspection. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average. However, progress, although improving, remained below average in reading, writing and mathematics, reflecting a legacy of weak teaching and previously low expectations. The school's assessment information, and work in pupils' books, show that standards continue to improve, and that progress is accelerating and is strong for most current pupils.
- The proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 are typically in line with national averages. This reflects good progress from pupils' various starting points.
- The proportion of pupils that achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2018 increased and was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 2 is typically at least in line with the national average. This reflects the effective phonics teaching and appropriately targeted support provided by the school.
- In 2018, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 exceeded that of other pupils in the school and the difference with other pupils nationally reduced. Scrutiny of current pupils' work, in a range of subjects, shows that disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make good progress from their starting points.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that most pupils with SEND make strong progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is because their barriers to learning are accurately identified, additional support is used well, and most teachers routinely plan learning that meets these pupils' needs.
- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, some pupils do not routinely receive support to broaden their vocabulary choices or improve their spelling, which detracts from the quality of their writing. In mathematics, pupils are able to show good understanding of number, shape and measure, but some are not regularly supported to develop reasoning.
- Despite improvements, historically, the most able pupils have not made the progress that they should by the end of key stage 2. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that progress for this group currently is strong. However, there are inconsistencies in the few cases where teachers do not routinely provide pupils with appropriate challenge or make use of opportunities to develop mathematical reasoning.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is strong. Adults work well together as a team. They identify the needs of individual children and different groups and ensure that children develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning. Consequently, children make strong progress and get off to a good start in their

education.

- The extent to which children join the early years provision with skills and abilities that are typical for their age varies each year. Leaders have identified, however, that children's speaking skills are often below those typical for their age. They have ensured that there is a focus on providing opportunities for children to develop these skills.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development increased over the period 2015–2017 and was above the national average. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development in 2018 decreased slightly, but is likely to be in line with the national average. This still represents good progress, as this group joined the provision with skills that were typically below those expected for their age in all areas of learning.
- The whole-school focus on reading and writing is evident in the early years provision at an appropriate level for the youngest children. Children learn and apply their phonics skills and are given opportunities to develop their writing skills. They are encouraged to read. During the inspection, the youngest children in the Nursery class were seen choosing a book from a selection of stories about Christmas for their teacher to read and listened attentively when she did so.
- Adults act as positive role models. Children quickly learn about expectations of behaviour and relationships. Children's personal, social and emotional development is catered for particularly well in the caring and nurturing environment in each class.
- Leaders ensure that children are kept safe. Adults have had safeguarding training and there are appropriate numbers of staff who have had paediatric first aid training. All statutory welfare and care requirements are met. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the identification and care of pupils who have additional needs.
- Adults carefully plan activities to consider children's interests and learning needs. They routinely assess children's learning accurately, during activities and over time. Adults use questioning well to support and assess children's understanding. Parents were positive about the online system used to share information about children's learning and which enables parents to contribute to their child's learning journey.
- Occasionally, activities do not provide enough challenge for the most able children or provide opportunities for them to demonstrate understanding at a level exceeding that expected for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	140189
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10058684

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	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	328
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Willie Crawshay
Headteacher	Kevin Lee
Telephone number	01493 780007
Website	www.moorlands.dneat.org
Email address	office@moorlands.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 September 2016

Information about this school

- Moorlands Church of England Primary Academy is part of the Diocese of Norwich. The school became a sponsored academy on 1 November 2013 and was the first school to be sponsored by DNEAT.
- The current headteacher has been in post since June 2015. At the time of the previous inspection, the current senior leadership team had been recently formed.
- DNEAT has overall responsibility for the school. The trust provides support for school improvement through the provision of professional development opportunities and the oversight of an Area Group Executive Principal (AGEP). The trust is responsible for all staffing appointments and audits the school's safeguarding arrangements. A local governing body is responsible for duties delegated by the trust, which include holding leaders to account for the standard of education provided and ensuring that the values and ethos of the school reflect those of the trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two Reception

classes and two Nursery classes. There are two Year 6 classes, one Year 5 class and three mixed year group classes in each of lower key stage 2 and key stage 1.

- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average but increased significantly in the previous year. The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average, although the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to classes and observed learning across all year groups. Many of these visits were carried out with school leaders. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work in a range of subjects, listened to a group of pupils read and reviewed the school's assessment information.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of school documents and policies, including behaviour and attendance information, records of visits carried out by the AGEP, minutes of the local governing body meetings and documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in lessons, met with a group of key stage 2 pupils and spoke to pupils when observing them at informal times, such as playtime and lunchtime, to gather their views on the school. Inspectors also analysed the nine responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of DNEAT, members of the LGB and senior leaders. Members of the inspection team held meetings with middle leaders. Inspectors considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered the 38 responses and 36 free-text responses submitted to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors also considered the 132 responses to a parental survey conducted on behalf of the school.

Inspection team

Paul Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fyfe Johnston	Ofsted Inspector
Gulshan Kayembe	Ofsted Inspector

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