

Old Buckenham Primary School

Abbey Road, Old Buckenham, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 1RH

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2019

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have made improvements to the quality of education pupils receive. Standards are rising and pupils make better progress than in previous years.
- The effective executive headteacher, ably supported by the head of school, has successfully built a strong staff team committed to improving pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their determined and sharply focused actions are improving pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders responsible for the pupil premium funding are knowledgeable and ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the appropriate support to achieve well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is highly effective. Support is well planned and monitored closely. Pupils with SEND make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils are well cared for in a safe, positive and inclusive learning environment. The nurture provision that the school provides to support more vulnerable pupils is strong.
- Pupils are polite and behave well. There is a harmonious, busy and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms.
- Pupils benefit from access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, leaders for subjects other than English and mathematics do not have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and outcomes in their subjects to ensure pupils achieve well across the wider curriculum.
- Many parents and carers are full of praise for the school's provision. However, some have concerns about aspects of communication with the school.
- Teachers plan learning activities that enable most pupils to make good progress. However, the work for the most able pupils is not routinely demanding enough. This means that these pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could.
- Children make good progress in early years. The Reception class children enjoy the enthusiastic teaching and wide range of activities planned for them. Leaders are working to ensure that the provision in the new Nursery class is as effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance, by ensuring that:
 - leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics monitor the quality of teaching and evaluate pupils' progress to identify any underachievement, and use this information to raise standards in the subjects they lead
 - communication with families is both timely and of a high quality, so that parents are better informed about their children's progress, and fully understand the reasons behind school leaders' decisions.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by ensuring that the most able pupils are set work that consistently challenges and stretches them to achieve as well as they are able to.
- Strengthen the early years provision by ensuring that the effective practice in the Reception class is replicated in the new Nursery class.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher's determined and ambitious leadership has created a positive ethos. The strong staff team are fully committed to improving the school. She is very well supported by the head of school.
- Over the last few years, the school has experienced many staff changes, which have challenged leaders' ability to bring about consistent improvements in the school's provision. Nonetheless, along with governors, they have managed this well by maintaining a clear focus on raising standards across the school. Leaders challenge underperformance if necessary and offer insightful support to staff at an early stage of their career or when they join the school. Leaders have ensured that staff understand the relatively new teaching approaches and apply them consistently. Their close monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that there are high levels of consistency from class to class.
- Staff enjoy working at the school and feel well supported because there are clear systems to share ideas and plan together. Staff are positive about the various training opportunities provided by the trust which sharpens their practice. They feel valued and are proud to work at the school. One member of staff, summing up the unanimous view of others, commented: 'Leaders have my full respect because they are challenging, inspiring and supportive. They always lead from the front and show us what best practice looks like.'
- The school improvement plan is focused on the right areas. Leaders check regularly to make sure that the actions they take have an impact on the school's improvement. The trust monitors the progress of this plan frequently, therefore holding the senior leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Leaders responsible for early years, English and mathematics have received effective support and training from the trust. Leaders are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and clear about what needs to be done next for standards to continue to rise. For example, the leader for English has led the introduction of the school's chosen approach to extending pupils' written vocabulary. The mathematics leader has been successful in increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop and improve their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Old Buckenham Primary is an inclusive school. The school's vision that 'every child counts' is echoed through all aspects of its work. Leaders ensure that there is appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The staff who help these pupils are particularly effective. This is because they know the pupils and their families well. They offer good support for pupils' well-being and encourage regular and prompt attendance at school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils' knowledge and experiences are broadened by special events and trips, for example, focusing on the Ancient Greeks or visiting the circus. The variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs and the opportunity to learn a musical instrument enhance pupils' sporting and creative development.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils learn about a wide variety of religions and cultures and are respectful of them, and of other people. They understand the importance of following the school's rules. Staff encourage pupils to take an active part in the school and local community, for instance by raising money for local charities. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium effectively in ways that ensure that the progress of disadvantaged pupils accelerates. Staff adjust their support depending on the needs of individual pupils. For example, some pupils receive specific interventions to help them develop their vocabulary and improve their communication skills.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), who is also the head of school, provides strong leadership and ensures that the funding for pupils with SEND is used effectively. Pupils receive appropriate support, and their progress is monitored closely. They are well cared for socially and emotionally, as well as academically. As a result, pupils with SEND make good or better progress from their different starting points.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport funding effectively. Sports coaches have been employed to deliver specialist training for staff and provide specialist teaching of the PE curriculum. Pupils' participation in sport has increased, with a much larger proportion of pupils taking part in lunchtime and after-school clubs and inter-school competitions than previously.
- The school benefits well from the support of the trust, which provides resources, specialist teachers and effective training programmes for staff. Frequent visits by the trust's director of improvement ensure that leaders are held to account for their actions. The director has helped to ensure that the quality of teaching has improved and that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and attainment are accurate.
- Leaders for subjects other than English and mathematics check teachers' plans to make sure they cover all aspects of the national curriculum. However, currently, these leaders do not have a clear picture of the quality of teaching or pupils' progress in the subjects they lead. This hinders their ability to ensure that pupils achieve consistently well in all subjects.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, or whom inspectors met during the inspection, expressed positive views about the school and its leadership. They would also recommend the school to other parents. One parent summed up the views of many by saying: 'I am very happy with the school. The staff are dedicated and work hard to teach and care for the children.' However, some parents feel that the school's communication could be strengthened further, so that they have a clear picture of their children's achievements and understand the decisions leaders take about the school's work.

Governance of the school

- The trust works effectively with the local governing body to ensure that governance is effective.
- Governors are well informed about the work of the school. They receive detailed reports from leaders and make regular visits to the school to check for themselves all aspects of the school's performance. This enables governors to challenge and support

leaders effectively. Despite actions to recruit more governors, there are currently still vacancies on the local governing body. Governors know where there are gaps in their knowledge and skills and keep themselves up to date by attending training provided by the trust.

- Governors ensure that their statutory responsibilities, especially in safeguarding pupils' welfare, are fully met and effective. Governors also ensure that the SEND, pupil premium, and PE and sport monies are managed efficiently under their scrutiny.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a clear culture of vigilance in the school. Staff understand that they must always do everything possible to try to protect any child who is at risk of harm. Staff receive good training in the many different aspects of safeguarding, including in areas of recent national concern, such as radicalisation and county lines. Leaders immediately give new members of staff all relevant safeguarding documentation, along with information on precisely how they must report a concern.
- Procedures for vetting staff when they are recruited are thorough. Appropriate checks are made on all adults who work in the school, including volunteers.
- The clear and detailed safeguarding records show that leaders do not hesitate to work with external agencies to protect pupils.
- All visitors, including parent volunteers, receive safeguarding information on arrival at Old Buckenham Primary School. This sets out how they should respond to a pupil who makes a safeguarding disclosure and what to do if they have concerns about a pupil.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' high expectations have resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These raised expectations are seen in the work in pupils' books, visits to lessons, discussions with pupils and the school's own regular checks on the quality of teaching.
- Teachers know the pupils well. They plan learning that motivates and interests pupils. Pupils in all classes are, therefore, engaged in learning and keen to succeed. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively across the school. Teaching assistants meet daily and work closely with the teachers so they are clear about their role in lessons. There is excellent communication between staff throughout the school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and this helps them to support pupils effectively. For example, during a mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teacher skilfully modelled how to divide three-digit numbers. She quickly taught them, using the correct vocabulary. Pupils then demonstrated that they understood and completed their own calculations confidently.
- Reading has a high profile in the school. Phonics is taught consistently and most pupils make strong progress. Leaders' chosen approach to developing reading meets the

needs of the pupils well, particularly in the development of pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills. Pupils have access to a wide variety of high-quality fiction and non-fiction books that are appropriate for their reading ability. As a result, the teaching of reading has quickly improved and most pupils make strong progress in this area.

- Teachers ensure that pupils are supported well with writing. Pupils have opportunities to write for a range of purposes and this supports their mastery of written language well. Teachers are clear with pupils about how to structure their writing and how to improve it. For example, in Year 5, pupils were enthusiastically writing information texts about a chosen animal. Pupils were encouraged to use colons for writing lists and semi-colons to link clauses. Their writing also included technical vocabulary such as 'extinction' and 'camouflage'.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers encourage pupils to use appropriate resources to help support learning. For example, in the Year 4 class, pupils were choosing to use counters and bead strings to help them understand how to divide two-digit numbers with remainders.
- Teachers use the school's chosen feedback strategies consistently to assess pupils' work. Pupils told inspectors that they appreciate the opportunity to review their learning and make improvements to finished pieces of work.
- Classrooms and corridors showcase examples of pupils' work from a wide range of subjects. The resources in the classrooms and prompts on display to aid pupils in their learning are particularly effective in supporting pupils with writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with SEND receive good support from skilled teaching assistants who understand their particular needs. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Teachers' planning ensures that learning activities are well suited to pupils' needs. In the majority of lessons, the most able pupils are set work that is more challenging. However, at times, it is not sufficiently demanding, and teachers do not extend pupils' thinking or move them on to the next task quickly. Consequently, the progress of the most able pupils is not consistently as strong as it could be.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They settle to tasks quickly and concentrate well. They respond to questions positively and are keen to contribute their ideas. Pupils told inspectors that lessons are interesting and fun, particularly their science lessons when they take part in practical experiments.
- Pupils appreciate their teachers. They commented, 'All the teachers are really helpful. They talk us through our work and give us different methods to use.'
- Pupils also told inspectors that they are happy and safe at Old Buckenham Primary School. If they have any worries, 'there's always someone to go to and they'll listen.' Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways,

including crossing the road or keeping personal information private when online.

- Pupils know about bullying and what to do if they see or experience it. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that they are confident their teachers will sort out any incidents quickly.
- All pupils are valued in the school's caring and positive community. Pupils show respect for adults and for each other. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of equality and the dangers of stereotyping. They show empathy for individuals who may be different to themselves. Pupils commented, 'It doesn't matter what you look like. It's about being kind and helpful to each other.' The strong links with the neighbouring Chapel Green School benefit both communities as pupils happily learn and socialise alongside each other.
- Older pupils enjoy the extra responsibility of being playground leaders, members of the democratically elected school and eco councils, and carrying out jobs during assemblies.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms, corridors and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils follow adults' instructions swiftly, meaning that lessons run smoothly with little interruption. Pupils look smart in their school uniform and treat each other, visitors and staff with respect. Pupils are polite, and many spoke with the inspectors and greeted them cheerfully.
- Staff follow the school's behaviour policy consistently and give the coveted 'golden badge' as part of the 'Golden Windmill Hall of Fame' to those pupils whose behaviour and approach reflect the school's aims and expectations.
- Leaders have worked hard to promote the importance of good attendance with pupils and their families, including disadvantaged pupils. Staff closely monitor why pupils are absent and follow up concerns with parents quickly. As a result, attendance rates are improving and overall attendance for the school is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is also reducing and moving nearer to the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 has increased over recent years. In 2018, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion achieving at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with national averages. At the end of key stage 2, the proportion achieving at the expected standard in reading was above the national average, and in line with the national average in writing and mathematics.
- In the last academic year, pupils at the end of Year 6 made much better progress in reading. However, progress in writing and mathematics was less secure.

- Standards are rising in phonics. In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check rose to above the national average.
- Current pupils are making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessment information provided by the school, supported by work seen in pupils' books, shows that standards are rising rapidly in all three subjects throughout the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are making better progress than previously due to more effective teaching and good use of pupil premium funding. The nurture leader is particularly effective in identifying and meeting pupils' needs. The school's current assessment information shows that differences in attainment are diminishing between disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress from their different starting points. Staff identify their needs quickly and support their learning effectively. Several parents told inspectors they are pleased with the way that the school helps their children to succeed.
- Most pupils take pride in their work and present it well. Handwriting is now a strength, and this is evident in a wide range of subjects and throughout the school.
- Pupils have many opportunities to practise literacy and mathematical skills through their topic work. Pupils' work on display and in their books shows that most groups are making good progress in a wide range of subjects, including science, history, geography and art.
- The work in current pupils' books shows clear evidence of most teachers building on previous learning and moving pupils on with appropriate tasks. However, at times, the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that these pupils do not consistently achieve the higher standards they should.
- The trust enables teachers to work closely with colleagues from other schools, including the local secondary school. This has improved the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and the transition for pupils moving on to Year 7. As a result, pupils are better prepared for the next stages of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join early years with knowledge and skills that are generally typical for their age. From their starting points, children make good progress because of effective teaching. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception has been above the national average for the past two years. Children are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- The provision in early years is well led and managed. Although relatively new to the school and to the role, the early years leader has a firm understanding of the strengths and areas for development in both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school has recently extended its provision by incorporating the site of the former pre-school to create a new Nursery class. The early years leader, supported by the

trust, has appropriate plans to establish this new provision. The Nursery staff are keen to support the youngest children effectively. The early years leader is working successfully with Nursery staff. He is providing training, coaching and support to ensure that the Nursery class is as effective as the more established Reception class.

- Relationships between staff and children in both the Nursery and Reception classes are extremely positive. Well-established routines ensure that children move safely around both classrooms with little fuss. Children behave well and get on well with each other. For example, in the Reception class, children were seen working cooperatively to tidy away resources before the start of the next session.
- Staff ensure that there is a wide variety of stimulating and engaging activities linked to the children's interests. For example, children in Reception talked enthusiastically to inspectors about their alien theme and asked questions such as, 'How do astronauts float in space?', and, 'How does the moon shine?'.
- Activities provide many opportunities for children to develop number and writing skills, as well as activities that improve their physical, creative and language development. For example, children were observed preparing for 'take-off' in the role-play space rocket and designing their own planets using cotton pads and food colouring. Children were using their phonic skills successfully to write the names of their planets. A group of children were confidently counting down from 10 as they wrote the numbers on their spaceship control panels.
- In the Reception class, staff engage children in conversation readily. They model language well, introduce children to new words and follow the children's interests to hold their attention and develop their skills. However, in the Nursery class, staff adopt a more supervisory role and do not always support children to make the most of the learning opportunities provided. Leaders are further developing the quality of teaching so that it is equally effective in both classes.
- Children and parents make frequent visits to both the Nursery and Reception classes before children start at the school. Parent workshops and 'stay and play' sessions give opportunities for parents to share information with staff about children. This effective transition enables staff to have a good understanding of children before they start. It also enables children to settle quickly because they are already familiar with staff and routines.
- Staff continue the strong partnerships with parents once their children have joined the school. Staff encourage parents to attend a variety of events in school, including the reading and mathematics café sessions, so that they understand how to support their children's learning and development at home.
- Safeguarding is equally effective in early years as in the rest of the school. All welfare requirements are met in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

School details

Unique reference number	143135
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10086773

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	188
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Tom North
Executive Headteacher	Julia Humphrey
Telephone number	01953 860380
Website	www.oldbuckenham-pri.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	office@oldbuckenham-pri.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It is sponsored by the Sapientia Education Trust. The trust delegates aspects of governance to the local governing body. The board of trustees is the accountable body.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive SEND support is below the national average. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The executive headteacher leads two other local primary schools, spending two days a week at Old Buckenham Primary.
- In September 2018, the school extended its age range to two to 11 year-olds. The school now has a Nursery class within the early years provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every class. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the executive headteacher, the head of school or the trust's director of improvement.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were examined by inspectors throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school (who is also the SENCo and designated safeguarding lead), several subject leaders, the school secretary, the trust's director of human resources, and the nurture leader. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the local governing body, the chief executive officer and the trust's director of improvement.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class, and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes, to seek their views about the school. Meetings were also held with two different groups of pupils more formally to discuss their learning and many aspects of school life.
- Some pupils were heard reading their books. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their reading habits and looked at their reading records.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including: assessment information; minutes from local governing body meetings; reports from external consultants; the school's own self-evaluation; improvement plans; and records about behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the 63 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 63 responses to the Ofsted free-text facility. Inspectors also spoke to parents before school and during the inspection. Inspectors considered the eight letters from members of staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Richard Hopkins

Ofsted Inspector

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