

Kirmington CofE Primary School

Kirmington, High Street, Ulceby, Lincolnshire DN39 6YP

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is exceptionally highly regarded by the whole school community. This very happy school is oversubscribed, and parents and carers recognise the high quality of education and care that the school provides.
- The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy head and, together with governors, they have established a positive culture and Christian ethos that underpin their leadership. This is one of the reasons why pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding.
- Pupils' results in the national tests are variable. However, this school is much smaller than typical. This means that the figures in these published results are not statistically significant.
- Subject leaders in English and mathematics are knowledgeable and skilful. They have introduced many changes to improve the quality of teaching, and these ideas are working. As a result, most pupils are making good or better progress in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good but the work teachers set for the most able pupils is not always hard enough. As a result, the most able pupils are not achieving as well as they could.
- Leaders have already identified that the progress pupils are making in the wider curriculum, for example in science, is not good enough.
- Staff in the early years often let children choose how they would like to play and learn together. Children are good at making friends and taking turns. Frequent dialogue with parents about their children's learning and development is also helping children in the early years to make good or better progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are exemplary. They take great pride in their work and their school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance has improved in recent years. However, the small number of pupils overall means that the published figures for attendance can swing enormously when only a very small number of pupils have been absent.
- Some aspects of the teaching of physical education (PE) are excellent. Pupils take part in many regional competitive events. Pupils know how to stay fit and healthy.
- Governors do not monitor the impact of additional funding, such as the sport premium, or hold leaders to account sharply enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that there is sufficient challenge to the most able pupils in English and mathematics.
- Continue to redesign the wider curriculum so that pupils gain the depth of knowledge and skills they need to make better progress in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- Ensure that governors systematically challenge senior leaders and rigorously hold them to account for both the educational and financial organisational performance of the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher inspires trust, confidence and loyalty from governors, staff and parents. Over the course of her many years of service, the reputation of the school has grown so that the number of pupils attending has almost tripled. The school is still oversubscribed, and many families have moved their children into the school from other schools in the area. In Years 1 to 6, 47% of pupils started in the early years foundation stage and 53% of pupils joined the school in other year groups, having started school elsewhere.
- The school works in a federation with another school, and when the headteacher is at the partner school, the deputy headteacher leads the school with an equally high level of drive and passion. This ensures consistency of expectations in the daily running of the school and in the quality of teaching.
- Parents are unanimously supportive of the school, with 100% of the 19 parents who responded to Parent View saying they would recommend this school to another parent. Two parents wrote supportive letters during the course of the inspection and several parents reported verbally, 'I have seen a dramatic improvement since my children came here.'
- Leaders have developed a motivated and tightly knit staff team and morale is high. In the inspection survey of staff views, 100% of the 10 respondents said that they are proud to work at this school. Leaders have invested in staff training, including for core subject leaders, and their good leadership has resulted in rising standards.
- Leaders engage staff when developing policies and procedures, seeking their views and taking workload into consideration. One member of staff commented in the staff survey: 'Discussions take place with staff before decisions are taken. As a staff we question... is it worth the extra time and effort?' This means that staff work hard but they know that they are trusted and respected by leaders to choose which policies will make the most difference to pupils' progress.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy and the rule of law. They visited the council chambers for the Holocaust Memorial Service and the Mayor of North Lincolnshire wrote to congratulate the pupils on their respectful prayers of reflection and on their impeccable conduct and good manners.
- Leaders linked work on safeguarding to pupils' study of the rule of law. A police community support officer taught key stage 2 pupils about offensive online behaviour that pupils may not have realised was illegal. Older pupils then designed a presentation to teach key stage 1 pupils what they had learned in a way that would help the younger pupils understand too.
- Leaders have identified the wider curriculum as an area that needs further development. One school development plan is shared across the federation and middle leaders from both schools are working together on this target for improvement. This is a good example of the way the federation strengthens leadership in both schools.
- Last year, leaders used additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils to improve

their writing. Writing was identified as an area for improvement following the last inspection so this was an appropriate priority for spending. Leaders also invested in strategies to build pupils' resilience and support their emotional health and well-being.

- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with the teaching assistants who work with pupils in small intervention groups. Leaders can show the difference this work is making. Leaders are very committed to making sure that all pupils have their needs met and they are equally ambitious for all pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school's continuing improvement. There have been many changes to the governing body since the previous inspection. There have been several resignations and many new appointments made, including the very recent election of new parent-governor representatives. The experienced chair and vice-chair of the governing body both resigned in the summer term.
- Leaders identified succession planning within the governing body as a key priority in the leadership section of the current school development plan. Governors were successful in electing a new chair and vice-chair to the governing body in September 2018. Governors have ambitious plans for the strategic direction of the school. The chair of the governing body said that governors want to ensure that this federation is 'truly child first'.
- Governors have successfully identified how they need to improve. Leaders have set success criteria in the school development plan, including the governing body achieving 'efficient meetings' and 'effective committees'. Success criteria also include governors 'valuing their induction, training and development'. Governors are engaging with training.
- The first priority in the school development plan is that leaders 'carefully manage each school's reducing budget'. The minutes of governing body and committee meetings show that governors are not yet evaluating the impact of spending decisions in enough detail. One of the core functions of governance is securing accountability, and governors need to improve their rigorous scrutiny of leaders' spending decisions on outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Detailed checks are made on any staff employed at the school, and a number of senior leaders and governors have had safer recruitment training. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are equally well trained to deal with safeguarding concerns. This means that the arrangements for keeping pupils safe are equally robust whoever is leading the school that day.
- The school has close professional working relationships with other professionals and leaders are careful to ask pupils what they think before having meetings to discuss their needs. This means that pupils' own feelings and wishes can be considered properly when important decisions are being made.

- Behaviour is outstanding, so parents know that their pupils are safe at school. There have been no exclusions. All parents replying to the Parent View survey said that their child feels safe at the school, with 95% indicating that they 'strongly agree'.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying and that they feel safe. Even the youngest children understand about staying safe. When asked in Reception, 'Why is it important to be quiet when we are doing the register?', one child replied, 'Because you might mark someone here that isn't'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics is good. In this small school, staff know the pupils very well indeed. Every adult knows every pupil by their name. There are trusting relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils feel very secure in this learning environment.
- All pupils read frequently in school. Pupils are very well supported by their parents, who also hear pupils read regularly at home. Some of the less able pupils in key stage 1 struggle to read their books because these reading books are not matched well enough to pupils' phonics skills and knowledge. This makes it difficult for less-able pupils to develop confidence and fluency in their reading.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use technical language precisely. Key stage 1 pupils can confidently identify prefixes and suffixes. When the teacher asked, 'Why have I split "return"?', a pupil answered, 'Because there are two syllables.' The teacher replied, 'That's right. It's easier to segment and then blend.' This secure understanding of phonics not only helps pupils learn to read but helps them with their spelling too. This is one reason why the standard of pupils' independent writing in Year 1 and Year 2 is high.
- Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to write independently at key stage 1. They encourage pupils to 'have a go' and this builds pupils' confidence. As a result, key stage 1 pupils are making good or better progress in their writing. There are also some good examples of high-quality writing at key stage 2. Most pupils are making good progress in writing across the school.
- There was a strong emphasis on reading comprehension, spelling, grammar and punctuation activities in key stage 2 pupils' English books throughout the autumn term. There have been more frequent opportunities for creative writing in the spring term. Teachers have noticed that key stage 2 pupils are not always enthusiastic about their writing. Leaders have very recently designed a creative writing plan that they hope will increase pupils' enjoyment of writing.
- Teachers have extremely high expectations of handwriting and presentation throughout the school and in all subjects. This helps pupils avoid careless mistakes when they are completing formal written methods of calculation. The school's assessment policy is consistently followed by all staff. Teachers check pupils' work carefully each day. Pupils respond to the high-quality feedback that teachers give them.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Leaders recently introduced a new approach to

the teaching of mathematics that has raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers' and teaching assistants' subject knowledge is good and they use mathematical language precisely and questioning effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants use visual models well to support pupils' understanding. Most pupils are now making good or better progress in mathematics.

- Teachers ensure good coverage of the mathematics curriculum. Teachers extend pupils' thinking in lessons and help them to make mathematical links, for example between fractions, decimals and percentages. There is some evidence of pupils being challenged to apply their mathematical skills to reasoning and problem-solving. This includes key stage 1 pupils. However, more frequent chances to solve difficult problems would help all pupils, especially the most able, to make even better progress and reach even higher standards of attainment.
- There is variation in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in other subjects, for example in history and geography. Pupils are usually taught with pupils of other age groups for these subjects and, in the key stage 2 class, pupils' ages range from seven to 11. Pupils of different ages in the same class often do the same work in their topic books. Teachers have not made sure that older children are consistently studying at the greater depth they need in order to make good progress across the wider curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This aspect of the school's work was recognised during the previous inspection and leaders have sustained this standard.
- Pupils in all year groups demonstrate excellent attitudes to their learning. There is a contract in the front of each pupil's book outlining 'what my teacher expects of me' and 'what I can expect of my teacher' and both pupils and staff fulfil their side of the bargain. Pupils take great pride in their handwriting and presentation. Pupils always try their best, applying themselves to their work in lessons with diligence and maturity.
- Pupils take part in an extremely wide range of artistic, cultural and sporting events and competitions. The exceptionally high standard of their contribution means that they often win the local heats and go through to regional finals. For example, they won the North Lincolnshire global rock festival in 2016, despite being one of the smallest schools in the competition.
- The school's strong Christian ethos helps to deepen pupils' understanding of the need to make a positive contribution as citizens, both to their local and global community. Following harvest celebrations, pupils donated food to the local community and also to the food bank at a homeless shelter. They give Christmas presents to pupils on the other side of the world. Pupils honoured and respected the fallen at the village Remembrance celebrations.
- Pupils develop their business skills and career aspirations through an enterprise project that lasts for a month each year. Pupils spend some of the profits they make, not just on themselves, but on donations to charity.

- Pupils understand how to eat well and stay fit and healthy. Year 6 pupils are proud of the '30-30' scheme, where rewards are given for pupils who complete 30 minutes of exercise in school and 30 minutes of exercise out of school each day. The rewards board was quickly filled.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' conduct in lessons is exemplary. There have been no exclusions and there is no low-level disruption in lessons. Even pupils with particular needs that make self-control difficult are managed superbly by staff. This helps all pupils enjoy their lessons and means that lesson time is never wasted.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct in and around the building between lessons, on the playground and in the dining room are excellent. Parents and pupils say that they like the fact that pupils of different ages can socialise together. Several parents and pupils said, 'We feel like part of a family here.'
- Pupils take care of each other. Pupils have a say in how the school is run. Pupils treat each other as they would wish to be treated. Pupils take pleasure in doing things for others, such as taking it in turns to serve on the salad bar and scrape plates after lunch. One parent summed it up when she said, 'This school teaches traditional, old-fashioned morals and values.'
- Attendance is good because pupils love coming to school. One parent said, 'Mine ask in the summer holidays, can we go back to school yet?'

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders say that children enter Reception with skills and abilities below those typically seen for their age. Records of children's work show that current Reception children are making good progress. Leaders' most recent assessments show that a higher proportion of children are now working at age-related expectations than the national average.
- Most pupils, apart from the less able, read with fluency and confidence. Pupils make good or better progress through key stage 1. This is because of good teaching. Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check have sometimes been below the national average but this is because of the very small numbers in each year group that make comparisons to national scores unreliable.
- At the time of the last inspection, leaders were challenged to introduce more writing into the wider curriculum and they have achieved this. Pupils' topic books include frequent opportunities for pupils to write in a range of genres. Pupils are writing to a high standard across the wider curriculum. This has contributed to improved writing results over the last three years.
- Mathematics results have been consistently good at key stage 1 but more variable at key stage 2. English and mathematics test results show that the progress pupils are making through key stage 2 is no better than average. However, typically, pupils are not present throughout key stage 2 as a high proportion of pupils transfer into the school into different year groups every year. This, coupled with the very small year

groups, makes comparisons of key stage 2 test scores with the national average unreliable.

- Pupils in upper key stage 2, especially the most able pupils, are not making sufficient progress across the wider curriculum.
- In 2018, just over half of pupils left Year 6 able to swim 25 metres of the pool, which is the expected standard set by the government. Half of those pupils were able to use different strokes, which is another expectation set by the government.

Early years provision

Good

- The quality of teaching in Nursery and Reception is good. The deputy headteacher leads on planning and assessment, working very closely with the skilful early years team. The deputy headteacher teaches in both the Reception and key stage 1 classes, so her detailed knowledge of each child helps to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1.
- There are extremely positive and nurturing relationships between staff and children in the early years. Adults are very gentle in the way that they speak to children. This makes children feel safe and helps all children, but especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good or better progress in their speaking and listening skills.
- Staff are adept at encouraging reluctant speakers to join in, and they model language very effectively to extend children's single words or sounds into sentences. This is helping all children make very good progress in their speaking skills from their individual starting points.
- Adults make delightful resources, often linked to stories, that entice children into different areas of learning. For example, having shared the nursery rhyme 'Hickory Dickory Dock', staff attached little felt 'mice' to clothes pegs that children could move around a clock face. Children were mesmerised by this and enjoyed practising their fine motor skills along with their numbers.
- Adults give children lots of freedom to choose what they would like to play. This helps accelerate children's learning because they are interested in what they have chosen to do. There are lots of costumes in the role-play area and children encourage their friends to join in with the games that they have made up. For example, one little girl dressed up as Maid Marian and invited someone to be Robin Hood. Leaders said that, on day two of the inspection, another little girl in Reception was pretending to be an Ofsted inspector. As a result of the frequent opportunities staff allow for child-initiated play, children are making very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- The rate of children's progress slows when adults keep children in an adult-led activity for too long when children have visibly lost interest. Some whole-class activities, where all children are asked to do the same thing, can also hold back the rate of progress for the most able children.
- Children are given lots of opportunities to write indoors and outside. This frequent practice helps children make good progress in their writing. For example, letters started with the words 'Dear Mouse' and children carried on writing independently. One child

reverses her 'd' for 'b', and writes the initial letter only of the word 'you', but her attempt at writing independently includes phonetically plausible spellings: 'Dear Mouse, Wen bib y run up the cilen? Dd y feell skib?'

- Leaders have already identified that the outdoor space is not good enough to enhance all areas of children's learning, and especially their physical development. Much of the outdoor area is out of bounds, including the large climbing equipment which leaders have assessed as unsafe. Plans to improve the outdoor learning environment are included as a key priority on the school development plan.
- Leaders have good links with a range of professional partners, such as the autism team and a speech and language specialist. Leaders know that their partnerships with other early years providers are underdeveloped. Some Nursery children attend school for part of the week, and private settings for other part-time sessions. Nursery children would make better progress in phonics if there was closer communication between settings to make sure that children are learning the same sounds in the same order each week.
- Early years staff have excellent relationships with parents and communication between them is strong. Staff undertake home visits when children start school and parents complete assessment sheets of their children's knowledge, skills and interests. The dialogue between home and school continues throughout the early years foundation stage. This helps to ensure that the assessments adults make of children's learning and development are accurate.

School details

Unique reference number	118014
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10086820

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Bellamy
Headteacher	Rachel Murray
Telephone number	01652 688 451
Website	www.ourschoolwebsite.co.uk
Email address	admin.kirmington@northlincs.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 March 2015

Information about this school

- This school is federated with another primary school.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- 95.5% of pupils are from White British backgrounds. 4.5% of pupils are from other White backgrounds.
- Children in the Reception class attend full-time and children in the Nursery attend part-time.
- The chair of the governing body has changed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Together with the headteacher, the inspector looked at information about pupils' current progress and records relating to attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector, accompanied by the headteacher, observed learning in all classes. The inspector, accompanied by subject leaders, looked at work in pupils' books and in other places where the work of children in the early years is recorded.
- The inspector listened to nine pupils read from Years 1, 2, 3 and 6. Pupils' learning and interactions in small groups, in lessons, in the dining room and at social times on the playground were observed.
- The inspector evaluated leadership documents provided by the school, including the school development plan, local authority reports, monitoring records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, early years staff and the SENCo. Meetings were also held with core subject leaders, the federation assessment coordinator and the federation business manager. Additional meetings were held with four members of the governing body and a representative from the North Lincolnshire school improvement team.
- The inspector considered the opinions of 19 parents who responded through Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including nine text responses from parents. Parents' views given verbally or in writing were also considered. The inspector also took account of the 10 online responses returned by members of staff and 10 online responses returned by pupils.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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