

Kettlefields Primary School

Stetchworth Road, Dullingham, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 9UH

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2019

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have been unable to maintain the school's effectiveness since the last inspection.
- Changes in leadership and staffing, and difficulties in recruiting staff, have led to some turbulence. Uncertainty about the school's long-term leadership has affected its improvement.
- Over time, pupils in key stage 2 have made average, rather than good, progress, because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been inconsistent.
- Until recently, leaders have focused too much on high rates of attainment which have masked a lack of progress in mathematics.
- Most-able pupils are not always fully challenged.
- A small minority of pupils do not behave well enough outside lessons.
- Pupils' understanding of British values and people from other cultures and backgrounds is underdeveloped.
- Staffing changes in early years have affected the continuity of children's learning.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness has been inconsistent.

The school has the following strengths

- Good interim arrangements to lead and manage the school are in place. Leaders are demonstrating the capacity to improve.
- An experienced and effective interim headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, is adding momentum to the school's improvement.
- A strengthened governing body is providing effective support and challenge for leaders.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons. They are pleasant, polite and well mannered.
- Attainment at the end of all key stages, including early years, is generally high.
- A broad curriculum is enhanced by a range of enrichment activities and events. Sport, art and music are popular with pupils.
- Parental confidence in the school is growing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by pupils, especially in mathematics, by:
 - gaining greater consistency in the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that new approaches to teaching mathematics become fully established
 - planning learning suited to pupils' different ages and abilities, especially those who are most able
 - monitoring and evaluating the impact teachers and support assistants have on the learning and progress of all pupils, and taking action when standards fall below the expectations of senior leaders.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - applying consistently the school's agreed procedure and policy to manage pupils' behaviour, especially during breaks and lunchtimes
 - making full use of the information recorded about pupils' behaviour to spot patterns and trends, and to inform actions to reduce incidents of poor behaviour
 - broadening pupils' understanding of British values and awareness of people from other cultures and backgrounds.
- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that the priorities identified in the school improvement plan, and in the improvement plan for early years, are fully implemented and lead to sustained improvement
 - evaluating accurately what is working well and what needs improving, and using this information to inform further actions for improvement
 - focusing all staff on the progress made by pupils, rather than just their attainment
 - continuing to forge improved relations with parents and carers and the local community
 - continuing to work with governors and the local authority to determine the long-term, substantive leadership of the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school's outstanding effectiveness noted at the time of the previous inspection has not been sustained. A succession of leaders have been unable to maintain the quality of teaching and the impact this has on improving the progress made by pupils.
- Staffing changes and difficulties in appointing new staff have limited the school's capacity to improve. During this period of turbulence, a significant proportion of parents lost confidence in the school.
- Concerns raised by the local authority last year prompted a review of the leadership of the school. An experienced and effective headteacher now leads the school on a part-time, interim basis. She has quickly gained a thorough understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and put plans in place to raise achievement.
- The interim headteacher has acted promptly to build capacity to improve. She is mentoring other leaders and providing further leadership training for them. The school's procedures to manage the performance of staff are being used to raise expectations and ensure that all staff understand their roles in school improvement.
- Leaders currently evaluate the school's effectiveness as good. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Leaders have relied too much on information about pupils' attainment, rather than the progress they make from their starting points. This has masked some significant underachievement of pupils in key stage 2, particularly in mathematics.
- Changes made to the school's approach to the leadership and teaching of mathematics are resulting in steady improvement. New resources to promote better reasoning and problem-solving skills and enable pupils to practise and refine calculation in more meaningful ways are working. However, this is not consistent across all classes. More time is needed to monitor the impact of this new approach and demonstrate that it enables pupils to make good progress.
- The leader responsible for the very few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well organised. Her records for each child show that she has a thorough understanding of their individual needs. Reviews of all pupils, including those with an education, health and care plan, are suitably maintained to ensure that they receive the support they need to make progress.
- A broad curriculum provides pupils with daily lessons in English and mathematics, and in a range of suitable foundation subjects. Pupils benefit greatly from specialist teaching in physical education (PE), French and music. A wide range of clubs and activities and off-site visits enhance pupils' learning.
- Actions taken this year by senior leaders to engage with parents more often are leading to some improvement. Responses made to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, during the inspection were much more positive than in the past. Leaders and governors recognise that they need to continue to forge improved relations with parents to win the full support of the local community.
- Leaders have engaged fully with the local authority to gain from the specialist support

and challenge it provides. Regular training and support for staff and monitoring meetings have contributed to the school's recent improvement.

Governance of the school

- Until recently, governance has not sufficiently challenged leaders to make the improvements needed. Governors have overseen a period of decline in the school's effectiveness. They have not challenged leaders well enough to make much-needed improvements.
- This has changed. The appointment of a new chair of governors last year has led to prompt improvement. Governors are more organised; they monitor the school's work much more closely. New governors have been appointed to the governing body and its members are working much more cohesively. Their decisive action to strengthen leadership has put the school on a clear course of improvement.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They recognise that the school is 'on a journey'. They know what they must do to contribute to its improvement.
- Governors ensure that additional funding is used effectively. The pupil premium is small because very few pupils are disadvantaged. Spending plans show that these pupils receive suitable assistance to enable them to make progress and participate fully in school life.
- The PE and sport premium is used effectively to provide external coaches to teach and coach pupils in a range of sports. Sport has a high profile in the school. However, some of this funding is also used to provide regular swimming lessons, which is not what the funding is intended for.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record is meticulously maintained. All necessary checks are made when appointing new staff.
- Procedures to protect pupils from harm are fully secure. A designated leader for safeguarding ensures that suitable records are maintained when staff raise concerns about pupils' safety and well-being. Partnerships with the local authority, social services and other support agencies are firmly established.
- Safeguarding training for staff, including in the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date.
- Access to the school grounds and buildings is controlled effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching varies across classes. Until this year, teaching in early years and key stage 1 was robust and led to consistently high standards. Staffing has been reorganised this year and a new teacher has joined key stage 2. Teachers have settled quickly into their new classes. However, the impact of these changes remains unproven at this stage.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Not all teachers plan learning suited to the

different ages and abilities of their pupils. Their books show that at times, all of them do the same work. This means that the most able are not always fully challenged. They work steadily because they are well motivated and eager to achieve, but they are not fully stretched to work hard on challenging tasks. Middle-ability pupils struggle because without further explanation, guidance and support, work is too difficult for them.

- Less able pupils are supported effectively by classroom assistants, who use a range of materials and resources to help them plan their work and check that they have included all of the components of learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is inconsistent. Some, but not all, teachers are fully confident with the new approaches adopted by the school to promote mathematical mastery. New resources help to make mathematics meaningful by encouraging pupils to apply their learning to everyday life, for example by using money, travel schedules and menus. However, some work is left unfinished. Pupils are able to work by themselves for sustained periods of time, but they tend to work at their own pace, which leads to steady rather than good progress.
- Not all teachers make the best use of time for learning. At the start of lessons, pupils are kept on the carpet for too long even though they know what to do and are eager to get on with their work. During these lengthy introductions, support assistants spend too long listening to teachers, rather than teaching and supporting pupils with their learning.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils carry their own reading books with them and are encouraged to read aloud to their partner. Younger pupils who read aloud to the inspector did so with fluency and clarity. When faced with difficult words, they knew how to break them down phonetically.
- Pupils are encouraged to write at length. Their books show that they write regularly using stories, poetry, letter-writing and comprehension to develop their literacy and reinforce their spelling and grammar. Teachers make good links to other subjects to promote writing skills. A recent trip to a local farm helped pupils to record details of their visit and to write creatively.
- Pupils say that they get regular homework. If they want more, they can use online resources provided by the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils show a limited understanding of British values and awareness of people from other cultures and backgrounds. They have regular assemblies and weekly personal, social and health education lessons, but this does not develop their wider understanding of life in a diverse British society. An excellent assembly during the inspection focused on developing respect for others, but pupils who met with the inspector were unaware of what the key messages presented.
- Pupils are well cared for in school and say that it is a friendly place to be. During

breaks and lunchtimes, most pupils eat and chat in friendship groups or play games together cooperatively. The school's records show that not all pupils manage their behaviour well enough during games activities, and this can lead to arguments.

- Pupils value their education and are rarely absent from school. The proportion of pupils persistently absent from school is consistently low.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is generally managed well in lessons. No incidents of poor behaviour were noted during the inspection.
- School records, the comments made by pupils during the inspection and the responses from parents to Parent View show that behaviour outside lessons requires significant improvement. A small minority of pupils regularly spoil it for others by misbehaving. Pupils say that when this happens, they generally feel safe, but it makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Teachers collate records about pupils' behaviour. However, leaders do not make full use of this information to spot patterns and trends, identify the reasons why it happens, and to determine what they need to do to improve behaviour. Incidents of poor behaviour outside lessons are not analysed in detail to inform actions to prevent them from happening.
- Pupils say that bullying does happen, but when it does they can go to any member of staff who will help them to sort things out. Bullying incidents are logged but are not categorised and scrutinised closely to find out how they can be prevented.
- Pupils are confident, pleasant and well mannered. They wear their uniforms with pride. In lessons, they are organised and ready to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over the last few years, outcomes achieved in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 1 have remained consistently high. The proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting expectations in the national phonics test is also high.
- Pupils go on to make average progress during key stage 2. Attainment in reading and writing by the end of the key stage has remained high, but has fluctuated in mathematics. Based on their at least average starting points, pupils do not make enough progress, especially in mathematics. Progress made by pupils in mathematics by the end of the key stage has improved year on year, but it remains much lower than that in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils are not always fully challenged in all subjects. In lessons, they are not always given work that is hard enough for them to do and are allowed to work at their own pace. This leads to steady rather than good progress made in key stage 2. None of the most able pupils last year exceeded age-related expectations by the end of Year 6 in the combined measure of reading, writing and mathematics. Current assessment information shows that although the most able pupils are making better

progress, very few of them will attain at a higher standard in the combined measure of reading, writing and mathematics this year.

- Leaders and governors have recognised that outcomes achieved by pupils in key stage 2 are not high enough. Detailed improvement plans are in place to raise achievement. This year, regular meetings to monitor the progress made by each pupil are enabling staff to identify those at risk of underachieving and take action to provide them with the support they need.
- Current assessment information shows that pupils in all classes are making improved progress. An intensive programme of additional support and regular testing is under way to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and help them to catch up. Assessments show that almost all pupils in each class are expected to attain age-related expectations this year.
- Very few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, making it difficult to make meaningful comparisons with the outcomes achieved by all disadvantaged pupils nationally. The pupil premium is used effectively to provide additional support for these pupils in reading and mathematics, and to ensure that they participate fully in school events and off-site visits.
- Pupils with SEND make similar progress to others because they are known well, and staff go out of their way to ensure that their personal and learning needs are met. The school's latest assessment information shows that most of them are making improved progress. A small minority of pupils with a high level of need are provided with effective, one-to-one care and support to enable them to remain in learning alongside other pupils.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- In recently years, early years provision has been a strength of the school, but at the start of this year, difficulties in recruiting staff led to some initial instability which has affected children's learning. The interim headteacher has acted swiftly to stabilise this by allocating an effective teacher on a part-time basis with experience of teaching in early years.
- The local authority provided specialist support to help improve provision in the Reception and Year 1 class, and the interim headteacher has supplemented this by making effective use of Fenland Opportunity Area funding to provide further training for early years staff. The local authority has also brokered arrangements for staff to visit other early years settings in the area to observe good practice. A detailed improvement plan is currently in place to improve early years provision.
- Teachers and support assistants are working more effectively as a team, but these arrangements are new and not fully established. Staff get to know children and their personal needs quickly. They teach children day-to-day routines to keep them safe and show them the behaviours expected of them.
- Daily phonics teaching enables children to learn new letters and sounds and develop their early reading skills. Teachers plan activities, games, music and song to engage children in practical learning that is meaningful and fun to do. Staff have made good use of a recent visit to a farm to build on children's experience and deepen their

learning back in the classroom.

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception has remained high in recent years. The latest assessments show that most children are making progress and are expected to meet or exceed the early learning goals this year. Additional support is in place tailored to children's needs to enable them to make progress and enjoy learning.
- Improvements have been made to the outside area to enable children to move freely between the classroom and outdoors. The hard-standing area includes a range of stimulating activities and space for children to move freely. Teachers are organised and provide a good range of well-planned activities for children to do. However, children spend too long on the carpet listening to staff rather than finding out for themselves.
- Good-quality 'learning journeys' include regular assessments of children's work. Photographs of them at work and play ensure that parents are kept informed of their child's development. Increasingly, this information is shared with parents online, enabling them to communicate regularly their views with staff. Improvement plans prioritise stronger links with parents and the home. Recent parents' mornings led by staff have enabled parents to spend time in the classroom to broaden their understanding of the school's approach to teaching and learning.

School details

Unique reference number	110771
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10084583

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthea Kenna
Headteacher	Caroline Clarke
Telephone number	01638 508360
Website	www.kettlefields.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	head@kettlefields.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than average. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those pupils who have an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has had four headteachers. An experienced headteacher has led the school on an interim, part-time basis since October 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was scheduled initially as a one-day inspection because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector had concerns about a decline in overall standards. The lead inspector found evidence to confirm that standards had fallen and returned the following day to complete a full inspection.
- The inspector observed with the interim headteacher the quality of teaching and learning in all classes.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, the leaders of mathematics, SEND and early years, the school council, five members of the governing body (including the chair), and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work. He looked at a range of documentation, including safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, and other information shared by school leaders.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books in lessons. He considered 45 responses from parents to Ofsted's Parent View. He also considered one complaint from a parent sent by email. No questionnaires for pupils or staff were used on this inspection.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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