

The Duke of Bedford Primary School

Wisbech Road, Thorney, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE6 0ST

Inspection dates

12–13 June 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The actions that the headteacher, other senior leaders and governors have taken have led to good improvements in outcomes in the past year.
- Recent developments have been based on a good understanding of the next steps. Leaders have responded well to the recommendations of the previous inspection, including seeking external support to improve teaching.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics because they are taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge in these subjects and make learning fun and engaging.
- Teachers often plan activities that build on pupils' prior learning, but the levels of challenge are not always enough to help the most able make good progress.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Their progress is carefully monitored and, as a result, they are thriving.
- Early years provision is good. Children make good progress in both the pre-school and Reception class. Adults know the individual needs of children well and plan engaging activities that help them to learn quickly.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They have good attitudes to learning and enjoy their work.
- Pupils work hard and are proud of their school. They do not, however, take enough care to present their work neatly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils know how to stay safe, both in and out of school. They are well cared for by staff.
- Pupils develop good skills in physical education and art. In science, history and geography, their work is not of such a consistently high quality. Topics in these subjects are sometimes studied in too little detail.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers pitch work at the right level for the most able and respond quickly when they are ready to have their learning moved on.
- Improve the quality of pupils' work in science, geography and history by:
 - ensuring that topics in these subjects are studied in sufficient detail to enable pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding more quickly
 - ensuring that pupils are expected to present work neatly all of the time.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have acted decisively and effectively to improve outcomes for pupils in the past year. Their actions, spurred on by the recommendations from the short inspection in March 2019, have led to a renewed sense of purpose and urgency in the school.
- In particular, leaders have focused successfully on improving teaching. This is being aided well by support from an external consultant and the local authority.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has further strengthened its systems for monitoring the impact of initiatives. Consequently, leaders, including those in charge of subjects, have a better picture of what is working well and what still needs improving. Recent initiatives, such as a focus on developing reading skills, are already helping to raise attainment and are indicative of the current strong drive for improvement across the school.
- The additional funding received by the school to support disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively. Leaders are evaluating spending more closely than in the past and it is now demonstrably having a positive effect on pupils' academic and social development.
- Due to well-managed provision and skilful support, pupils with SEND make good progress. The special educational needs coordinator knows the pupils under her care well. School funds and budgets are allocated carefully, including for additional support outside lessons.
- The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Well-planned provision ensures that pupils produce good-quality work in English and mathematics. The curriculum leader has developed suitable plans for strengthening provision in science, history and geography. It is too soon to see the impact of this, and work in these subjects continues to vary in quality because some topics are not studied in sufficient detail.
- Sport is a strong feature of the school, with many pupils participating in a wide range of activities. The primary school sport and physical education (PE) funding is used effectively to employ coaches in areas such as swimming. Pupils are very positive about their opportunities to take part in competitive sport. They greatly enjoy PE lessons and other activities, such as walking a 'Daily Mile'.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong and effective focus on supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils keenly take responsibility by being school councillors, sports leaders or reading buddies. Activities such as a recent 'Asian Culture Week' ensure that pupils are prepared for life in multicultural Britain.
- Parents and carers are generally pleased with the school. They say that their children enjoy school life. However, some are worried about how well the most able are challenged and would like better communication. For example, some are not clear about how the school tackles bullying or what was done in response to the previous inspection.

Governance of the school

- Governors acknowledge that the short inspection earlier this year has encouraged them to be more rigorous in their monitoring and evaluation of initiatives for school improvement. This successful refocus has enabled the governing body to help the school leadership team to secure the required improvements in a short time. They effectively support and challenge leaders and are committed to the further development of the school.
- Governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and areas that need more work. This is because they receive detailed information from the headteacher about pupils' progress. They visit the school regularly to find out for themselves about the quality of provision. This means that they are beginning to ask probing questions about how well pupils are doing.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safe recruitment practices are carried out. Training for all staff ensures that they are in a position to recognise and act upon signs of risk or harm immediately. Leaders are persistent in their pursuit of support for vulnerable pupils and their families. The training covers the 'Prevent' programme so that staff are aware of the need to be vigilant for the potential radicalisation of pupils.
- In the pre-school, for children aged two to four years, there are no breaches of early years welfare requirements. Staff regularly check the indoor and outdoor classrooms to ensure that children are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There has been an effective focus on improving the quality of teaching. Training and support have ensured that it is now good.
- Teachers confidently introduce new topics in English and mathematics because they have good subject knowledge. Pupils enjoy their work because teachers establish a culture where they can work without fear of failure. As one commented, 'Sometimes going wrong helps you to improve.'
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and their behaviour. However, they too readily accept work which is not the pupils' best in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- The teaching of phonics and early reading skills is particularly effective. Children enjoy their phonics sessions, joining in enthusiastically with the sounds and actions linked to different letters. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make in their writing so that learning is made purposeful.
- Teachers use good questioning to establish what pupils know and then to challenge them to think more deeply. They are making increasingly good use of assessments of what pupils already know to plan what to teach next. However, work is sometimes too easy for the most able pupils, and teachers do not respond quickly enough to move them on to the next task as soon as they are ready. When this happens, the most able

do not make rapid enough progress.

- Pupils with SEND receive good support from teaching assistants, who understand clearly their particular needs. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers so that they are clear about their role in supporting individual pupils or groups. They do this well, providing calm and sensitive support to pupils.
- Staff ensure that their classrooms are attractive and welcoming. Displays are colourful and well maintained and assist pupils in their learning. For example, there are displays that help pupils understand the new technical language they will encounter in their mathematics lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's 'HEART' values are well understood by the pupils and are reflected in the respect they show each other and visitors. They are proud of their school and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They show determination and sustain concentration when working.
- Pupils are confident, kind and caring towards one another. They are welcoming to new arrivals, ensuring that they settle quickly.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They report that staff listen to them when they have a worry and respond quickly. Although some parents raised concerns about how well leaders respond to bullying, records show that school procedures are followed closely.
- The school has worked closely with outside providers, such as the NSPCC, to help pupils become more knowledgeable about the different types of bullying and how to respond. Pupils can explain clearly the potential pitfalls of using the internet. They know what to do to avoid danger in the local community and are pleased that they learn to swim as 'it keeps us safe'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well. They move around school sensibly and conduct themselves well, even when they have to stay indoors for much of the day due to bad weather. They enjoy playtimes and, during the dinner break, they sit together and happily share a conversation over their meal.
- Pupils work hard most of the time and can talk confidently about their learning. They enjoy their work but do not always take enough care to present work outside English and mathematics neatly.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are punctual and attend regularly. Overall rates of attendance are above the national averages and few pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with SEND, make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Although test results at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 were below average in reading and mathematics, this reflects the impact of the lower attainment of a significant proportion of pupils who joined this cohort in Years 5 or 6. Internal school data shows that pupils who have been at the school for more than a short time attain standards similar to those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who arrive during the school year are given good support, but this is not always enough to help them catch up due to their, sometimes, low starting points.
- Current progress is especially strong in reading. Skilful teaching of phonics has meant that phonics outcomes at the end of Year 1 are above national averages. Any pupils who struggle with phonics are given additional support to help them catch up rapidly. Pupils in key stage 2 read widely and often. Older pupils develop good reading habits and demonstrate a good awareness of children's literature.
- The school is currently focusing on increasing the proportion of pupils who reach the higher standards at the end of each year in reading, writing and mathematics. While there is an improving picture in the current year due to recent training for teachers, there continue to be times when the most able are not challenged well enough, slowing their progress over time.
- As well as making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, pupils are beginning to achieve well in other subjects. In PE, pupils improve skills quickly. Pupils produce good-quality artwork, as is demonstrated by the attractive displays around school.
- The quality of pupils' written work in science, history and geography is uneven. At its best in, for example, recent science work in Year 3, pupils demonstrate good knowledge and use their skills confidently in investigations or experiments. However, in some year groups, activities do not do enough to help pupils develop the depth of understanding required by the national curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years have both their social and academic needs met well. As a result of the good teaching they receive, children, including disadvantaged children, make good progress. By the end of the year, most children achieve a good level of development. They are well prepared academically for life in Year 1.
- Teaching in both the Reception class and pre-school is good because adults carefully record children's progress and plan activities that match the next steps in the child's learning. Learning activities are interesting and sustain the children's concentration. For example, a group of children were showing good levels of concentration and perseverance when hunting for hidden letters or words outside.
- The teaching of phonics captures the children's interest and promotes effective learning. Staff ensure that children have many opportunities to recognise the sounds and practise writing the associated letters. As a result of the teachers' imaginative and

carefully planned approach, children are developing a strong foundation in both reading and writing.

- From the start of their time in the pre-school, children are encouraged to develop independence and good attitudes to learning. Children come into school each day ready to learn. The calm, purposeful start to the day sets the tone for the learning that follows.
- Children's behaviour is good and shows that they feel safe. This is because staff provide a caring, nurturing environment in which children learn how to get on with each other, take turns and communicate effectively. Children talk politely to each other and to the adults who teach them. They enjoy playing together and working together.
- Both the Reception class and pre-school have large outdoor areas. They are used well most of the time. Occasionally, outdoor activities in the Reception class lack a clear purpose and are not helping children to get ready for the more structured learning they will encounter when they move to their next class.
- The early years is well led. The early years leader works closely with the pre-school leader to ensure that there is continuity in provision across both classes. She ensures that the children's progress is monitored carefully and responds quickly if she identifies any children who are in danger of falling behind.
- Safeguarding is effective. All adults involved in the early years are vigilant and have the appropriate qualifications and training to provide a high level of care.

School details

Unique reference number	110705
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10100719

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Leaton
Headteacher	Cathy Bailey
Telephone number	01733 270243
Website	www.dukeofbedford.peterborough.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@dukeofbedford.peterborough.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2019

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school with seven classes. Children in the early years are taught in a Reception class and a pre-school which takes two- to four-year-old children.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made several short visits to observe learning at other times.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff and members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 56 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also talked with parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at their work and examined school documents, including: the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress; planning and monitoring documents; the school development plan; records relating to behaviour and attendance; safeguarding information; and health and safety documentation.
- The inspectors analysed responses to inspection questionnaires from 25 members of staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Craig

Ofsted Inspector

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