

Wheatfields Primary School

Nene Way, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 3WF

Inspection dates

20–21 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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher's strong and focused leadership, supported by other leaders including governors, has secured significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge leaders well. This ensures that there are high expectations of all leaders and staff in school.
- Leaders' effective monitoring and evaluation of pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics are ensuring that pupils achieve well because swift action is taken to support pupils who fall behind.
- Teachers use assessment information to plan appropriate learning activities that meet pupils' needs and abilities, by checking their understanding and learning. They swiftly address misconceptions to enable pupils to achieve well.
- From their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress.
- Pupils are well cared for by staff. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that staff keep them safe. Their conduct around school is good following well-established routines, which pupils clearly understand. Parents, staff and governors support this view.
- Teaching and the curriculum in the early years are good. This is due to structured opportunities to develop important skills, including children's use of language. A large majority of children are ready for learning in Year 1 by the end of Reception.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through the wide range of curriculum experiences, both in and out of school.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work for the most able pupils to enable them to attain the highest standards.
- Some parents are not supportive of the academic rigour that is beginning to be embedded in the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching still further so that the most able pupils reach the highest standards of which they are capable of by:
 - sharing, across the school, strategies which have proved successful in raising academic standards and increasing the progress of the most able pupils
 - ensuring that these pupils are consistently set challenging tasks to extend their learning and progress.
- Support parents to help their children with their learning by:
 - creating opportunities for parents to visit school more regularly to learn with their children and address any misconceptions about the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has shown strength of character in her determination to secure a good standard of education for all of the pupils in the school. Together with the support of the governing body, underperformance has been successfully overcome. This has paved the way for improvements in the quality of teaching and improved the progress pupils make in their learning.
- Senior leaders, with appropriate support from the local authority, have embedded secure procedures so that they and class teachers know how well pupils are learning and developing. Pupils' attainment and progress are carefully checked. Teachers' assessments are moderated with those made in other local schools and with nationally produced materials to ensure that they remain accurate. Inspectors found the school's assessments of pupils' attainment to be accurate.
- There has been a significant turnover of staff since the previous inspection. Leaders have put a considerable effort into ensuring that they recruit high-quality staff. Newly-appointed staff to the school say that the quality of their induction and professional development is of a very high standard and has enabled them to establish themselves as successful teachers at the school without delay. They are now able to share and develop good practice and assessment processes across the wider curriculum.
- Leaders have changed the culture to one of high expectations for all members of the school community. Staff have established a very positive climate for both learning and socialising. This has led to a school which is calm and purposeful. As a result, pupils are well aware of the expectations to work hard, behave well and show mutual respect to all.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of their school. They know what they do well and what needs to be done to embed the improvements to ensure further success. Leaders hold teachers stringently to account for pupils' progress in learning.
- The care given to pupils' welfare and personal development helps pupils' learning. For example, high-quality nurture strategies supported by the local authority have been used for pupils with particular barriers to their learning. During discussions with inspectors these pupils confirmed that the school has helped them to begin to manage themselves, enjoy learning and aim to do their best. As a result, they achieve well in school.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well to secure pupils' progress and emotional welfare. These pupils are closely monitored so that additional support can be provided when necessary. Well-trained teaching assistants and support staff provide additional and specialist support in lessons, to individuals and groups of pupils. Through this carefully targeted support, differences in achievement are reducing.
- The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are opportunities to learn about life in Britain and in other countries. Trips and visits complement subjects studied and pupils learn to respect others irrespective of where they come from, what they look like or how they choose to live. This prepares pupils well for secondary school and for playing a full part in life in modern Britain.

- Support for pupils with SEND is strong. The good-quality support pupils receive helps them to make good progress. Leaders ensure that additional funding for these pupils is used effectively.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively to increase staff expertise in the teaching of PE by arranging for specialist coaches to work alongside school staff. The school has provided many additional opportunities for pupils to engage in activities and develop their sporting skills.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the work of the school. Of those who responded to the online questionnaire, the majority would recommend the school to another parent and reported that their children were happy in school. However, there remains a small number of parents that do not approve of the higher expectations that the school is demanding.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. To increase capacity and bring about changes rapidly, they have agreed on a co-chair structure. The governing body has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is focused on school improvement. Governors hold leaders to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes. Governors share senior leaders' determination to eradicate underperformance.
- Governors have undertaken training to examine the school's performance data, meet safeguarding requirements and regularly seek answers to their questions regarding the progress of different groups of pupils in different classes.
- They ensure that child protection and safeguarding are a high priority for staff and procedures fully meet requirements. The investment in an electronic system for recording such information enhances this provision.
- The governing body continues to work with the community to address any misconceptions they have of the school and invite them into school to learn with their children.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong safeguarding procedures mean that leaders are quickly alerted to any concerns. Leaders treat safeguarding concerns with the utmost importance. They respond rapidly and proportionately, working positively with parents and agencies, so that pupils remain safe. Detailed records indicate the strong priority leaders give to any safeguarding concerns.
- Leaders provide regular training and updates so that members of staff are well equipped with the knowledge and skills to ensure pupils' safety.
- The vast majority of parents spoken to consider that their children are happy, safe and secure at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Improvements are a result of a commitment to training teachers and offering them professional development opportunities. This is enthusing teachers and helping them to make improvements in their practice. This means that teachers now meet most pupils' needs well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan activities which captures pupils' interests and give their learning purpose. Pupils report that they enjoy their learning and want to succeed. This has also improved attendance levels.
- Staff use the school's behaviour policy to good effect and pupils understand the higher expectations of them. Pupils behave well in lessons and are corrected if they are not concentrating on their work.
- Teachers are sharing good practice and learn from one another. They assess pupils' work carefully and plan appropriate next steps in their learning. However, at times not all teachers challenge the most able pupils sufficiently to enable them to make the strong progress that they are capable of.
- Regular checks on pupils' understanding are also helping teachers to identify misconceptions quickly. This means that the issues are addressed quickly, so that these misconceptions do not persist.
- Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils read fluently and with confidence, and read for pleasure at home. From the early years, pupils are taught to use their knowledge of phonics to support their reading of new words. The teaching of phonics skills has improved since the previous inspection.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about teaching writing skills. In English and literacy, they successfully teach pupils to use increasingly complex grammar and punctuation in their writing. They encourage pupils to try out new vocabulary in their writing. Opportunities for pupils to apply and practise these skills in other curriculum areas need further development.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed effectively to support the learning of those who find learning more difficult. Pupils with SEND are given frequent additional support in class or in additional sessions outside the classroom in reading, writing and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are better than they were at the time of the previous inspection because the quality of teaching has improved. Teachers and teaching assistants expect pupils to behave well and the pupils have risen to this challenge. As a consequence, pupils enjoy school, achieve well and attend more regularly.

- Pupils spoken with said that they feel safe and can explain why. Pupils report that bullying is rare. They know about the different forms it can take and to whom they should report any instances.
- They believe that they are well cared for and that there are always adults to help them in the classroom or around the school. Parents also agree with this and believe that their children are happy and safe in school.
- Pupils are keen to share their achievements. They are proud of their school and show respect for each other and their teachers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff have set high standards to which pupils respond well. Pupils' behaviour in the classrooms, the playground, in the dining hall, and as they move around school is good.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and friendly at all times.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are largely very positive. This is seen in the work they do in books and their willingness to participate in lessons. Pupils show adults and other pupils' respect, which has helped all groups of pupils to feel confident to share their views and to do well in their learning. These good attitudes to learning are a key factor in the pupils' improving rates of progress.
- The high levels of attendance are an indication of the successful strategies that the school has deployed to improve it, including regular meetings with the family support worker and the school's inclusion team, ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning experience.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Progress and attainment have improved since the previous inspection. The school's assessment information and the quality of work in books clearly indicate that current pupils in every year group are now making consistently good progress.
- Results in the national phonics screening check in Year 1 have improved over the last three years and are now above national average. This improvement is due to daily good-quality teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1.
- Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 have risen and are now approaching the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 have also risen. In Year 6 in 2018, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in writing and mathematics was at or above national average.
- The school's own information shows that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress shown in pupils' books over time and during lessons confirm this. The level of challenge to stretch pupils' thinking is not

consistently applied in each curriculum area, this results in the most able pupils not consistently reaching the higher standards they are capable of.

- Overall, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make good progress across the curriculum from their starting points because of successful interventions in individual or small-group activities.
- The most able pupils make similarly good progress to their classmates, although sometimes opportunities are missed to add further to
- Teachers are quick to identify any pupils who start to fall behind. When this happens, teachers make effective provision for them, either within the class, in small groups, or individually. As a result, they catch up quickly.

Early years provision

Good

- This provision is a strength of the school. Effective leadership and management have successfully strengthened the quality of learning since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching continues to be good, as a result, the large majority of children make good progress and are well prepared for learning in Year 1. Leaders have ensured that the welfare requirements of the early years are met.
- Children in early years make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception has been improving year on year.
- Highly positive relationships exist between staff, children and parents. This helps children to quickly become confident learners and have a positive attitude to school. The online assessment system gives the parents good information about how well their children are developing.
- Staff work well as a team to constantly refine their practice in order to maintain a good standard of provision. They accurately measure the progress children make and have well-thought-through plans to make further improvements. Staff are committed to securing the very best outcomes for all children.
- Children behave well, take turns, share resources and listen attentively. They are able to sustain concentration for a considerable time because they enjoy learning and are relaxed in their play.
- All adults sensitively and skilfully intervene in order to develop and enrich children's use of language. Adults play and work alongside children to explore and practise new skills, observing children carefully, building on their interests and using open-ended questions effectively to stimulate their imagination and creativity.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and number are promoted effectively. Opportunities for children to write, mark-make and count are plentiful around the early years area.
- Funding to support the learning of disadvantaged children is particularly well used to enhance speech and language development so that their progress is similar to that of their peers.

School details

Unique reference number	131197
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10088666

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs	Mr Andy Moffat & Mrs Lisa Ling
Headteacher	Theresa Thornton
Telephone number	01480 466919
Website	www.wheatfields.eschools.co.uk
Email address	office@wheatfields.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 March 2017

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- There have been several changes of staff since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- A range of documentation was examined. This included leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, their development plan, attendance and behaviour information, assessment information, minutes of governors' meetings, local authority monitoring records and documentation relating to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors, leaders and staff from the school. Along with a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors visited lessons across each year group to observe teaching and learning.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally.
- Observations of pupils' behaviour took place during lessons, in an assembly, at playtime and lunchtime and when pupils were moving around the school.
- Inspectors jointly reviewed a range of pupils' work in English, mathematics and other subjects with leaders. They discussed pupils' work and the monitoring of their progress. An inspector heard pupils across all years read.
- Inspectors considered 29 responses to Ofsted's survey of staff views.
- The inspection took account of the views of 183 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which included 49 free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school

Inspection team

Ahson Mohammed, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Hann	Ofsted Inspector
Sebastian Gasse	Ofsted Inspector

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