

Sedgeford Primary School

Ringstead Road, Sedgeford, Hunstanton, Norfolk PE36 5NQ

Inspection dates

27–28 June 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors have not ensured that the good overall effectiveness of the school has been maintained since the previous inspection. Weaknesses in governance are having a negative impact on the school.
- Governors do not focus well enough on the quality of teaching and on outcomes for pupils. They do not provide appropriate challenge to leaders.
- Some governors do not understand their roles well enough. Similarly, some governors have not established good working relationships with leaders.
- Self-evaluation is not sufficiently analytical. As a result, governors do not have a clear enough idea of the school's current performance.
- Improvement plans are not fully developed. They lack key features, such as measurable success criteria and clear progress steps or milestones.
- The quality of teaching has not been consistently good over time. Some weaknesses in the quality of teaching remain. Expectations of pupils' work and their behaviour are not always high enough.
- Some pupils do not make the strong progress that they should. There is little evidence of the progress that pupils make in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Some pupils do not take enough care with the presentation of their work.

The school has the following strengths

- In the very short time that she has been in post, the interim executive headteacher has had a demonstrable impact on improving the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is led and managed well. Pupils with SEND make particularly good progress in terms of their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is a safe and happy place. Pupils like coming to school and enjoy strong relationships with the adults that work with them.
- Pupils generally behave well and follow the school's rules.
- The early years provision is improving. The environment, both indoors and outdoors, is welcoming and appropriate.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of governance by ensuring that all governors:
 - understand their role, including that it is a strategic one and is not operational
 - develop and maintain appropriate relationships with leaders
 - offer appropriate and constructive challenge to school leaders
 - maintain a clear focus on the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of school improvement processes by ensuring that:
 - self-evaluation is forensic and analytical
 - improvement plans are sharply-written and precise, with measurable success criteria and milestones to aim for.
- Improve teaching and outcomes so that more pupils, throughout the school, make strong progress in English and mathematics, and in a wide range of other subjects, by:
 - ensuring that all staff have high expectations of what pupils can do and how they should behave
 - raising expectations of how pupils present their work
 - ensuring that outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are given enough focus.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors have not ensured that there has been consistent leadership of the school since the previous inspection. They have not focused well enough on the most important matters and, as a result, the overall effectiveness of the school has fallen.
- The school is part of a federation of three schools that share a single governing body. The federation lacks a clear vision that is shared across its schools. There is little sense that everyone is pushing in the same direction for the common good.
- Self-evaluation is underdeveloped. The school's self-evaluation document describes what the school does but does not analyse how well it does those things, and what the impact of actions has been. Leaders and governors have not employed an appropriate degree of self-criticism, to enable them to analyse the school's performance properly and identify fully what still needs to improve.
- Improvement planning is similarly simple and basic. Plans do not include features, such as measurable success criteria, and clear deadlines and milestones, that are typical of effective improvement plans. It is unclear how progress towards achieving the plan's aims will be measured and monitored.
- The interim executive headteacher has been at the school for a matter of weeks. However, in the short time that she has led the federation, her impact on improving the school is clear. For example, she and the deputy headteacher have worked together to improve assessment practice. The school was subject to statutory moderation by the local authority this year. The accuracy of the school's assessment judgements, at the end of each key stage, was confirmed.
- The improvements made to provision for pupils with SEND is clearly evident. The special educational needs coordinator's (SENCo's) strong knowledge and understanding of this area is clear in the way that the provision is now planned and the available resources are used. The SENCo knows each of the pupils on the register very well and has an excellent understanding of their individual needs and their strengths. She has ensured that appropriate arrangements are put in place to meet those needs and to encourage and celebrate the strengths. This is ensuring that pupils with SEND make good progress, particularly in terms of their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The pupil premium grant is spent effectively. Leaders ensure that the specific barriers to learning are identified for each disadvantaged pupil. They use this information to put the right support in place. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their individual starting points.
- Leaders have begun work to develop the school's curriculum. A range of actions have been taken to improve the curriculum and more work is planned. For example, leaders have changed the emphasis of teachers' planning from thinking about what they want pupils to do, to thinking about what they want them to learn. The curriculum already has a number of strengths. For example, the school makes good use of the local environment to enrich the subjects that pupils learn about. High-quality texts are used as 'hooks' to interest pupils in their learning.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern British society. They are taught about

equality and the ways that people can be different. The school has a long-standing link with a school in Birmingham, where most pupils are Asian and Muslim. Each school visits the other for a short residential visit in order to broaden their understanding and experience of the groups and cultures that make up modern British society.

- The sport premium is spent effectively. The funding is used in a range of ways to increase pupils' access to competitive sports and to a range of different sporting activities. Leaders have found that the way the sports premium is spent has enabled pupils who are not keen on traditional sports to be successful in other physical activities, such as yoga.
- The local authority is supporting the school well. Most of the weaknesses found during this inspection were already known to the local authority before the inspection took place. The local authority is taking appropriate action to both support and challenge leadership and management, particularly governance.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not have a clear and accurate view of the school. They have not evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses fully.
- Some governors do not understand their roles well enough. They overstep the mark and trespass into matters that are the remit of the school's leaders rather than their own. Some governors do not appear to understand that their role is a strategic one and not an operational one.
- Governors do not focus well enough on the key issues of quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. They are too concerned with day-to-day management matters, such as how and when pupils are prepared for sporting events, rather than taking effective strategic responsibility for the school.
- Some governors do not interact appropriately with the school's leaders, showing scant respect for them as professionals or individuals. The tone of some written communication is, at best, ill-judged and is, at times, outright rude. This is unacceptable.
- Governors do not challenge leaders effectively. While some governors challenge leaders, inappropriately, about matters that are not their concern, they do not provide suitably robust challenge about the matters that do. The minutes of governing body meetings show very little evidence that governors ask leaders challenging questions about the quality of teaching and outcomes.
- Governors have not ensured that the secular identity of the school is clear. Some of the school's official documents contain statements that are appropriate for schools that have a religious ethos but not, as is the case, where the school does not.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record of pre-appointment checks meets requirements. All the necessary checks to ensure that only suitable people are allowed to work with children are carried out.

- The school's designated safeguarding leads have excellent knowledge and understanding of current guidance. Leaders have recently attended training to update their knowledge about the role. They have also ensured that all staff have received the training they need to be able to recognise possible signs of abuse and neglect.
- Leaders are highly committed to protecting pupils. They assess the concerns that are brought to their attention and make appropriate decisions accordingly. Where necessary, leaders take prompt and decisive action to keep pupils safe. They keep detailed and thorough records of concerns and the actions taken in response to them.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the 'Prevent' duty. They know possible signs of radicalisation and extremism and are alert to them. Leaders know the appropriate actions to take, including where to seek advice, should they ever have concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has not been consistently good over time. Instability in leadership, and weaknesses in governance, mean that, until recently, too little focus has been placed on the quality of teaching. The good quality of teaching evident at the previous inspection has not been maintained.
- Teaching staff do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can do or how they should behave. For example, in writing, teaching staff accept pieces of work from pupils that are not their best effort, in terms of how much they have written, the quality of their handwriting and how well they have applied their knowledge about spelling and grammar.
- Teaching staff do not plan well enough for pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils' exercise books show very little evidence of their work in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. While it is clear that pupils are taught about a range of subjects, it is less clear that they are making strong progress in terms of knowing more and remembering more about these subjects.
- The school uses a commercial scheme to teach phonics. The programme is followed closely and the recommended resources are used well. Teaching staff give pupils plenty of opportunities to revisit and review the sounds that they have learned, and to blend them together to read and separate them to spell. As a result, pupils develop strong phonics knowledge and they apply these skills in their reading and writing.
- Leaders have taken part in extensive training, developing their own knowledge about effective ways to teach mathematics. They have ensured that this is passed on to other teaching staff and teaching practice has improved as a result. For example, pupils are now given plentiful opportunities to use their mathematics knowledge to investigate ideas and solve problems.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Staff know pupils well as individuals. They know what their individual needs and interests are and respond to them well. As a result, classrooms are nurturing and supportive places, where more pupils are starting to make better progress.
- Leaders have improved the way that assessment information is collected and used. Assessment information is now used in a more targeted way to help leaders and staff

to think more closely about where pupils are successful and where they need more support. This is improving both outcomes and the quality of teaching.

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 is a happy and caring place. The very small size of the school means that everyone knows everyone else well. As a result, the school has a friendly, 'family' feel. Pupils and staff alike enjoy being part of the school community.
- Pupils know what bullying is and the forms it can take. They say that bullying rarely happens at their school. They know that they should tell an adult if they are ever worried about bullying, or about anything else. Pupils are confident that staff will always help them when they need it.
- Pupils show good attitudes to equality and difference. Pupils know that it is wrong to judge others on their physical or other characteristics. When discussing racism in a meeting with the inspector, one pupil said, 'It's really wrong and you shouldn't do it all,' summing up the feelings of the group.
- Pupils are taught about a range of ways to keep themselves safe. They are taught about e-safety, including how to keep themselves safe while using the internet, at a level appropriate to their age. For example, during the inspection, pupils in key stage 2 were learning about how to make passwords more secure and less 'guess-able'. Pupils explained clearly to the inspector why this is important for protecting themselves online.
- Pupils generally have good attitudes to learning. They show an interest in the things that they learn about and usually listen carefully during lessons. Pupils like their school and enjoy coming to it. They enjoy learning about subjects, particularly art and mathematics, and spending time with their friends.
- Pupils do not always take enough pride in their work. For example, in mathematics, pupils frequently scribble work out, when they are not happy with their work or do something wrong, rather than crossing out neatly. Some pupils do not take enough care with their handwriting and their work is not as well presented as it should be.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils generally behave well. They know the school's rules and follow them well. Pupils of all ages play together sensibly, enjoying each other's company. On the whole, pupils behave well in their classrooms and listen carefully to what teaching staff tell them.
- Attendance has an appropriately high focus and is taken seriously by leaders. The school's high expectations of pupils' attendance are clear. For example, the school has not shied away from issuing fixed penalty notices when families have taken unauthorised periods of leave for holidays during term time.

- The school's current rate of attendance is above the national average. All pupils attend very well and there are currently no persistent absentees.
- At times, where teaching is less strong, there is a small amount of low-level disruption. When expectations are not high enough, pupils sometimes chat to each other, or fidget and daydream, instead of listening carefully to the adult who is speaking.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The very small size of the school means that published assessment information must be viewed with great caution. Typically, there are fewer than five pupils in a year group. Consequently, the results of end-of-key-stage assessments cannot be discussed as it is likely that individuals could be identified.
- There have been weaknesses in pupils' progress in English and mathematics over time. Scrutiny of current pupils' exercise books shows that pupils are not making as much progress as they should, particularly in writing.
- There is little evidence of progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Although it is clear that pupils learn about other subjects, these do not have a high enough profile. As a result, it is not clear that pupils are making strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Over a third of the school's population have a special educational need. Pupils' individual needs are met well, and pupils with SEND are making increasingly strong progress from their individual starting points. Pupils with SEND make particularly good progress in terms of their social and emotional development and their mental health needs.
- A high proportion of pupils are disadvantaged. Leaders and staff know these pupils well. They identify disadvantaged pupils' individual barriers to learning and ensure that suitable measures are put in place to help and support them. As a result, disadvantaged pupils generally make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They have good phonics knowledge and they use this knowledge well, enabling them to read a variety of texts accurately. Pupils show a keen interest in, and love of, books. They enjoy reading books by their favourite authors and explain clearly why they have chosen them. Pupils show good understanding of the texts they read.
- Pupils' exercise books show that they are starting to make better progress. This is particularly the case in mathematics. Pupils told the inspector how much they now enjoy mathematics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the early years has not been consistently good over time. There remains some inconsistency. When teaching is less strong, children become restless and chatty because expectations of how they should behave are not high enough.
- Over time, the early years provision has not been led and managed well enough. As a

result, the statutory requirement that a member of staff is qualified in paediatric first aid is not currently met.

- The positive impact of recent leaders is clear. For example, the interim executive headteacher swiftly checked that the statutory requirements for the early years were met, soon after joining the school. When she discovered that no member of staff was qualified in paediatric first aid, she took immediate action to rectify this. A member of staff has been booked to attend the earliest available course. This booking was made prior to the inspection.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve the early years provision. Leaders sought advice from the local authority's early years advisers to help them to identify the weaknesses in the early years provision, and its strengths. They took appropriate action in response to this advice. The early years provision, including the quality of teaching, is now improving as a result.
- The early years teaching space has been much improved. Leaders and staff have made the classroom less cluttered and made it easier for children to access resources and activities. The outdoor area is also now more useful and appealing. For example, a shed that was previously used for storage, taking up a large part of the early years garden, has now become the children's much-loved reading hut.
- Children generally behave well in the early years. They work and play well with their older friends in their mixed-aged class. Children know what is expected of them and follow instructions well.
- Children in the early years are well cared for. Staff know each child very well and relationships between adults and children are strong. Staff ensure that children are kept safe in their classroom and throughout the day.
- There are few early years children at Sedgeford. Typically, four or five early years children join the school every September. As a result, it would be inappropriate to talk about assessment results because of the risk of identifying individual children. However, overall, it is clear that children generally make reasonable progress during their time in the early years. They make strong progress in phonics.

School details

Unique reference number	120880
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10107593

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ward
Interim Executive Headteacher	Paula Jones
Telephone number	01485 570997
Website	www.stmaryfederation.co.uk
Email address	office@sedgeford.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 July 2015

Information about this school

- Sedgeford is a very small primary school. Currently, 27 pupils, from Reception to Year 6, attend the school. There are two classes, one for pupils in Reception and key stage one, and one for pupils in key stage 2. It is anticipated that there will be one class, for all pupils, from September 2019.
- The school is part of a federation of three schools, formed in May 2015. The St Mary Federation includes: Sedgeford Primary School, Brancaster CE Primary School and Docking CE Primary School. Sedgeford is the only school in the federation that does not have a religious character.
- There have been several changes of leadership since the previous inspection. There have been two interim executive headteachers this academic year. The first led the school during the autumn and spring terms. The current interim executive headteacher joined the school after the Easter holiday, in April 2019.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. She observed parts of lessons, some jointly with school leaders.
- The inspector looked closely at the work in pupils' exercise books and talked to them about their work.
- The inspector looked at a range of the school's documents including assessment information. She checked the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks and other documentation concerned with the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers.
- Meetings were held with: leaders, governors, a representative of the local authority, and the pupils in key stage 2.
- The inspector considered six responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the accompanying free-text comments.
- The inspector took account of nine responses to the staff survey and 10 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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