

# Inspection of The Weatheralls Primary School

Pratt Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire CB7 5BH

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Inspection dates: 3–4 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils like this school. The vast majority of parents and carers agree. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils said that things are much better than they used to be, and they enjoy being in school. They particularly like lessons where they do practical things, such as in science or art.

In previous years, pupils have not learned as much as they should. As a result, some of the pupils in Year 6 still have gaps in their learning. Pupils learn better now because teachers carefully map out what pupils need to learn and ask them questions to ensure that they have understood what has been taught.

Pupils now behave well. They work well in lessons and do as expected. A few pupils have unmet learning needs, which the school has identified. The staff have been trained to deal with issues, allowing the lessons to continue, but the support for these pupils needs to be more effective.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in school. They trust that the staff will take care of them and sort out any problems that they may have. Pupils say that bullying is rare but, where it does happen, staff deal with it quickly.

Playtime is enjoyable, with a range of apparatus for the pupils to use. Pupils have space to run around. All that took part in the online survey confirmed that the school supports their child's wider personal development along with a wide range of subjects available to their child, and inspectors agree.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The headteacher, with the support of her team and governors, has brought about significant improvements, starting with the younger year groups. In their words, they are looking for continuity for town and community – 'to be the best they can be'. Leaders do not shy away from accepting that outcomes at the end of key stage 2 have been poor.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have unmet needs. There exists a lack of fluency in literacy and numeracy for older pupils. Leaders know it is difficult to change outcomes in two years. The multi-academy trust group, which oversees accountability on progress, acknowledges that work is in progress and it has taken difficult decisions to address the issues.

Staff morale is high. The headteacher has made sure that all staff are aware of the key priorities for the school. Staff believe that leaders are supporting their work well. Opportunities to take part in further training exist so teachers can improve their practice. Subject leaders have begun to check on what is being taught in their subjects. This has helped improve teaching.

Teachers plan together and are clear on what needs to be taught and when. This

helps the pupils understand the work before moving on to more challenging work. This needs further development in subjects such as religious education and computing.

Teachers are trained in teaching phonics; younger pupils make a quick start to early reading. Intervention is provided to address any shortfalls. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 did not learn their letter sounds well enough when they were younger. They now struggle to read accurately or fluently. Many pupils do not read regularly out of school.

Early years provision is good. Staff understand what children already know and how to accurately plan for children's new learning. Leaders have established routines for children to follow in the early years. Children are purposefully engaged in activities and adults make effective use of time for learning.

Mathematics is now taught well. There is a focus on making sure that pupils have a secure understanding of number. The older pupils struggle with complex calculations because they do not know their times tables well enough. This is due to poor teaching in the past.

Pupils talk positively about their science learning in particular. Teachers have emphasised the development of subject-specific vocabulary.

Teachers work hard to support pupils with SEND in their classes. Yet, some pupils with SEND need far more support than that which the school is able to provide. There is now a lead member of staff targeting this need. The parents are supported, the backlog of paperwork has been completed, and the education, health and care plans were submitted and granted last year. Helping children to learn to speak, read, write, and understand numbers and shapes has been a focus.

Children's lives are enriched by numerous activities beyond the core curriculum. For example, learning about democracy, pupils created a manifesto and conducted elections.

Children are safe, play happily together and enjoy school now. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and work hard.

Regular visits occur by local church leaders to take assemblies. Children therefore have an opportunity to interact with other adults. Questions such as 'who in the story of Moses acted responsibly?' are explored. This allows the children to reflect upon their own spiritual and moral development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that all staff are trained in their duty to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant to spot signs of neglect or abuse. They follow the school's policy for

raising alerts when needed. Leaders have created a culture which ensures that pupils are kept safe from harm.

The school works well with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils are safe, especially the most vulnerable.

The curriculum educates the pupils about risks, including those on- and offline.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Older pupils have too many gaps in their learning. Leaders need to ensure that these have the support needed to become more fluent in the reading, writing and mathematics skills. This will enable more pupils to meet or exceed the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with SEND have not previously had enough support. Leaders need to ensure that the support now in place is effective.
- Subject leaders are beginning to be more effective in supporting teachers to develop their practice. Leaders need to continue to develop their skills in contributing to school improvement.
- The school needs to support parents, so that they in turn can support their own children with their learning. This is especially so in reading as many pupils told us that they do not read or are read to at home.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143941
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10112150
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	599
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ms Nicola Close
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lisa Radcliffe
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.weatheralls.cambs.sch.uk">www.weatheralls.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The Weatheralls School converted to an academy on 1 February 2017 and is sponsor-led by Staploe Education Trust.
- School leaders and most of the teaching staff are new to the school since becoming an academy.
- The vast majority of the pupils are of White British origin, with a small number from other ethnic groups.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors looked closely at the curriculum areas of reading, writing, English, mathematics, history and science. This involved discussions with those responsible for these areas and lesson visits to see children learning, accompanied by leaders. Inspectors talked to pupils about what they had learned.
- They looked at how the school was meeting the needs of pupils with SEND by visiting lessons to see the strategies identified being put into practice by the teachers.

- Discussions were held with members of the trust board, the local governing body (advisory body), parents, school leaders at all levels, teachers and pupils across the school.
- A telephone discussion was also held with the school improvement partner, followed up by scrutiny of documents.
- Various documents were looked at, including training records of the staff, attendance and behaviour logs, curriculum plans for each year group, pupils' books and other work displayed in classrooms and within the school.
- Safeguarding was inspected by talking to those responsible and checking key documents. Staff around the school were questioned about their training and knowledge about keeping children safe, including the external catering team. The inspection team talked with pupils formally and informally about them feeling safe and cared for.

### **Inspection team**

Ahson Mohammed, lead inspector                      Ofsted Inspector

Linda Allison    Ofsted Inspector

Nathan Lowe    Ofsted Inspector

Cathy Tooze    Ofsted Inspector

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