

St Mary's Community Primary School, Beetley

Elmham Road, Beetley, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4BW

Inspection dates

3–4 November 2016

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

- Senior leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the previous inspection.
- Pupils are polite and respectful. They are caring and concerned about others. Pupils, teachers and parents work well together so that the school plays a central role in the community.
- The provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress because teaching is effective and tasks challenge children appropriately. They are well prepared for when they start in Year 1.
- Governors are very committed and ambitious for the pupils in the school. They scrutinise the work of leaders effectively and check that funding is used efficiently.
- Leaders have successfully improved attendance, which was below that of other schools nationally. It is now broadly average.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are promoted well. Nurture sessions and individually planned support enable pupils who have previously found school difficult to thrive.
- Disadvantaged pupils are increasingly doing well because there is bespoke support for these pupils that meets their individual needs.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the beliefs of different faith groups and British values.
- The focus on improving teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics has ensured that many more pupils are now well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A few of the most able pupils are not yet achieving the high standards of which they are capable across the curriculum.
- Pupils' progress across the wider range of subjects in the curriculum is improving but is not consistently strong in every subject. This is because leaders do not apply the same rigour in monitoring other subject areas that they do to English and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and deepen knowledge, skills and understanding across the broader curriculum, by planning for the development and mastery of skills across subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Place even more emphasis on ensuring that the most able pupils have challenges that encourage them to deepen and broaden their learning in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the work of subject leaders to further develop their skills in monitoring and curriculum development, so they have the same impact on raising standards as seen in the core subjects
 - ensuring that leaders focus in depth on how successfully pupils are learning when judging the quality of teaching, particularly in the case of the most able pupils and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and parents speak overwhelmingly positively about the improvements the headteacher has brought in expectations, opportunities and outcomes. Staff are wholeheartedly signed up to her vision and are just as committed as she is for the school to be the very best it can be. Parents' views were typically summed up in the comment, 'Mrs Balado believes in my child and his worth in the world.'
- Leaders have ensured consistency in approaches to teaching, and in teachers' expectations and management of behaviour. Checks on teaching are accurate and result in useful feedback for teachers to help them improve.
- Coaching and mentoring support provided by senior leaders is helping to drive improvements. This has resulted in all teachers wanting to remain at the school, feeling positive about the changes and becoming more effective. The newly appointed subject leaders are benefiting from the same approach, although they are still developing their roles and skills.
- Leaders and governors rightly prioritise improving pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, including that of disadvantaged pupils, and their actions have been successful. However, pupils' progress across other subject areas such as history, modern foreign languages and computing is not as good. This is because leaders do not apply the same rigour to monitoring these other subject areas and have yet to ensure that pupils build on and develop their skills systematically.
- The curriculum is supported by a variety of clubs and activities outside school. Additionally, the school's themed weeks, based, for example, around scientific enquiry, stimulate pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Pupils learn about interesting places, including places of worship involving a range of different religious faiths. This broadens pupils' horizons, develops their confidence and supports their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has a good relationship with the local authority and has benefited from well-targeted challenge and support.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved considerably since the last inspection. Governors are passionate about the school and make a valuable contribution to school improvement through systematic and frequent checks on the school's work.
- The governing body is well led and managed. Members undertake roles that closely match their skills. The governing body has reviewed many of its practices and is now working efficiently, providing both challenge and support to the school.
- Leaders routinely update governors about the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, governors are in a position to support the headteacher's decisions about teacher pay increases. They are clear about the steps the school needs to take to address any aspects of underperformance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The protocols used by staff to safeguard pupils are effective. Policies are up to date and reflect local and national guidance.
- Staff are well trained in child protection and supported by good systems of record-keeping and communication with other agencies. Leaders treat incidents relating to pupils' safety thoughtfully and follow appropriate procedures.
- The school deals with the very rare fixed-term exclusions sensitively, providing appropriate 'return to school' support as required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good, and much improved since the last inspection, when it was found to require improvement. Senior leaders have taken effective action to address any weak teaching and, consequently, good teaching is now much more consistently secure.
- Teachers use new procedures to determine accurately what pupils know and understand. These processes are well embedded for the assessment of reading, writing and mathematics and are supporting teachers in planning next steps in learning. Teachers work consistently within the school's marking policy to encourage pupils to correct their work, offering pupils additional challenges when appropriate. Pupils take time each day to carefully respond to their teachers' comments, contributing to their good progress.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is strong. The school has placed a love of reading high on its agenda, recently updating a new bright and well-stocked library. This has resulted in pupils becoming more confident readers who enjoy reading at school and at home, and for different purposes.
- The teaching and assessment of subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet fully developed. Leaders have recently produced whole-school plans for the range of subjects and recognise that more work needs to be done to ensure that pupils are supported to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education.
- The pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills in writing across the full range of subjects. They are able to write at length with confidence and apply their phonics, grammar and spelling skills well, but this is not as yet consistently applied across the curriculum in all year groups.
- In mathematics, pupils of all abilities are set appropriate tasks to help them develop confidence and to understand and practise their mathematical skills. In the majority of classes, strong subject knowledge and modelling of methods are supporting pupils to make good progress. In some classes, the pace of learning is not sufficiently fast for the most able pupils to make rapid progress. Leaders work well with parents to ensure that they understand how mathematics is taught in schools by running parents' learning sessions so that they can support their children at home.
- Through liaison with the special educational needs leader, teachers ensure inclusiveness. Pupils who have behavioural issues or other special educational needs

and/or disabilities have their needs effectively met within the classroom alongside their peers. They are well supported with appropriate learning activities and strategies and flourish in this environment.

- The teaching of physical education is good. The sports funding has been used to train a sports specialist teacher within school. Teaching and learning are of a high quality and have led to more pupils taking up extra-curricular sport and the school experiencing success at competition level.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All members of staff, including the designated safeguarding leaders, have received training to safeguard pupils, and this is updated regularly. Staff understand the importance of rigorously following policies and procedures, and recognise the signs that pupils may be vulnerable to abuse or radicalisation from extremist groups.
- Systematic checks are carried out on new members of staff, governors and regular visitors to the school. As a result, pupils at St Mary's Primary School are very safe in school.
- Staff provide sensitive support and care where specific individual pupils are found to be troubled or upset or have found it difficult to be in school in the past. Staff set up clear routines where children are able to take time out and are then enabled to return to learning, or play, at the appropriate time.
- The school provides a good range of services to support pupils and their families, including the use of nurture groups. A parent told inspectors that their child is 'supported and encouraged to do well, this is a gem of a school'.
- Pupils say that there are occasions where there is some bullying or incidents of racist or homophobic name-calling. Equally they say that this is never tolerated and staff will always put a stop to it immediately.
- Attendance has improved over time, and is now at the national average. Leaders work well in partnership with outside agencies to support families in understanding the importance of attending regularly and bringing their children to school on time every day.
- Pupils understand and talk about the fact that people hold different views and have different cultures and religions, and that these should be respected; they have a good understanding of British values.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well around school, showing consideration for each other. They work collaboratively together in lessons with enthusiasm and often help each other 'if someone is stuck'.
- Leaders ensure that the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied throughout the school. Pupils know that they are treated fairly and trust that the adults in school will listen to any concerns and make sure that they receive any necessary help and

support. Parents feel welcome in school, where they know that their children are safe and happy.

- The school keeps detailed logs of any incidents and these are followed up appropriately. The 'angel' weekly award for each class ensures that pupils who do the right thing are rewarded.
- Most pupils are self-assured and confident learners. Disruptions to learning are rare because pupils know that this is unacceptable and the vast majority of pupils are really keen to learn. In a Year 2 class, a child automatically apologised in recognition of having interrupted learning.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. Behaviour is generally sensible in and around the school buildings. Pupils play well together at breaks and lunchtimes.
- The school has a small number of pupils who find it difficult to behave well. Much is in place to support these pupils and to help other pupils understand their needs. As a result, learning is rarely disrupted by any untoward behaviour. Exclusions are rare.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from harm. They are aware of e-safety.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved over the last two years, as the school has focused on the teaching of English and mathematics. The outcomes from the 2016 national tests at the end of key stage 2 show that the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average.
- The proportion of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, reaching beyond expected standards is above the national average in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, significantly above in writing, and below average in reading and mathematics.
- The proportion of children in the early years achieving a good level of development in 2016 was above the national average, an improvement on 2015. Similarly, the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at Year 1 continue to be above the national average. The teaching of phonics is consistently good.
- Pupils' good progress means they attain well to reach the expected standard in reading. There are good systems in place to support pupils developing greater fluency and accuracy, and the new school library is helping to establish a culture of reading more widely. Teachers and additional adults work well together to check that pupils continue to make progress and provide useful support if pupils need to catch up. Current information shows that pupils in both key stage 1 and 2 are making strong progress from their starting points to achieve the expected standards. However, a small number of the most able pupils do not read enough challenging texts or a wide enough range of different authors to reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Results across the school are above average in writing at the statutory English assessment.
- A scrutiny of work across other subjects confirms that writing was not to the same

level unless it has an English grammar, punctuation and spelling focus rather than being linked to the skills from the subject being taught. This is an area that the school has already identified for improvement and it has started to establish writing more systematically across the curriculum.

- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are given well-organised support, whether in lessons or in small groups, to enable them to make good progress from their various starting points. This is because the staff identify their needs promptly and accurately. Where relevant, support for behaviour issues enables pupils to overcome their issues and begin to learn successfully.
- Work sampled from pupils' books shows that, in the majority of classes, pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing, mathematics, religious education and physical education. Progress in other subjects, such as history and geography, is not as strong as in English and mathematics because the tasks set are not always demanding enough, particularly for the most able pupils. Pupils are not ready for learning at the next stage of their education in modern foreign languages, music and computing.

Early years provision

Good

- The leader in the early years has an accurate view of the strengths of the team, resources and environment at her disposal. She utilises these to ensure quality in the teaching and learning provided so that children make good progress. Early years staff are able to accurately identify their own areas for improvement.
- Children enter the early years with a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding and many have starting points typical for their age. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, many of them are demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding that show good progress. In 2014, only approximately half of the children achieved a good level of development ready for key stage 1. This number has risen year on year, and in 2016, 83% of the children achieved a good level of development.
- Adults are skilled in intervening to extend learning and help children to think creatively. At the same time, they know when to let children continue their own learning and make choices that help them to become more independent. The staff ask useful questions and help children to develop their thinking and explain their thoughts. They are quick to use children's interests to help the children learn well.
- The learning environment is used well, and inspectors observed numerous activities organised to encourage children's learning and exploration. Children move around with a good awareness of others.
- Children are very well cared for and kept safe. Teachers and teaching assistants get to know the children quickly and use their interests to support learning. The relationships with parents are very positive and parents say that they feel able to raise any concerns with the staff.
- The arrangements for starting school are good. Children settle in quickly and are already taking part in school life. The 'buddy' system with Year 6 children works

particularly well, so that children are confident to mix and socialise with older children. The transition to Year 1 is skilfully managed because the close links between the teachers are used productively to help the children move effectively onto their next stage of learning.

- Children are happy and feel safe and well supported. They enjoy coming to school and making new friends.

School details

Unique reference number	121011
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10019608

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	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Buttifant
Headteacher	Jessica Balado-Lopez
Telephone number	01362 860114
Website	www.beetleyschool.co.uk
Email address	head@st-marysbeetley.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is small than the average-sized primary school. All year groups have one class each.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets government floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and an even smaller number who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- Together with the headteacher, inspectors looked at pupil progress data, information about performance management of teachers, documents relating to behaviour and safety, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 14 parts of lessons, some alongside the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed pupils' learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in lessons, at lunchtime and at playtimes and met with groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy and middle leaders, class teachers and members of the governing body. A conversation was also held with a member of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the opinion of 62 parents through Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents).
- Inspectors took account of 17 online responses returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

Cassandra Williams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Olive Millington

Ofsted Inspector

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