

St Mary and St Peter Catholic Primary School

East Anglian Way, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 6QY

Inspection dates

15–16 January 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school is in a period of transition from one leadership team to another. Previously, self-evaluation has been limited and improvement plans not fit for purpose.
- There have been many initiatives introduced with the intention of raising standards. These have not been evaluated rigorously enough. The number of different initiatives has led to confusion among teachers and a lack of understanding from leaders and governors about what has been effective.
- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not have high enough expectations across all subjects and year groups. Reading and writing are not developed as well as they might be across the school, including in the early years.
- Opportunities for leaders at all levels to work with colleagues to develop teaching skills have been limited until very recently.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are not yet good enough. Progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 was below national averages in all of reading, writing and mathematics in 2018.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school and try hard in lessons. They have strong, positive relationships with their teachers. Parents and carers are highly positive about both these aspects of the school and value the communication between staff and families.
- The multi-academy trust (MAT) and school leaders have identified what the school needs to work on to improve. They have started this work and some impact has already been shown.
- Leaders have put in place a curriculum that is designed to provide quality learning and the development of knowledge and vocabulary, although it is not yet fully embedded. Pupils are given many opportunities to experience enriching activities such as opera, music and theatre.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress from their individual starting points in English.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - using self-evaluation more precisely to understand what the priority areas for improvement are
 - measuring the impact of actions rigorously so that the quality of initiatives can be evaluated
 - further developing roles of leaders at all levels to enable them to develop their subjects and areas of responsibility appropriately.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, and consequently outcomes, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of all pupils
 - teaching develops pupils' knowledge and understanding well
 - there is a greater focus on literacy across the curriculum from the early years onwards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- At the time of the inspection, there was an interim headteacher, who had been in place for less than two weeks, after the previous headteacher left in December. The MAT, together with the local governing body (LGB), has appointed an executive headteacher to work across two schools in the MAT from February 2019. As a result of this, the school is in a period of transition between leadership teams.
- The self-evaluation of the school has been limited. It has not been used to identify areas for improvement that link into the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan is highly detailed, but unachievable in terms of the number of initiatives running simultaneously in a smaller than average-sized primary school. The interim headteacher, alongside the leadership team, is undertaking a full self-evaluation and review of improvement plans, but this has not been completed.
- Leaders are now aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know what needs improving and that they need to have a more focused strategy for school improvement.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning has been limited until recently, except for new staff. The deputy headteacher has worked successfully with the newly qualified teachers in a peer coaching model, with noticeable improvements in the quality of work in their classes' books. There are plans to roll this out to the rest of the staff, but this has not started.
- School leaders for English, mathematics and religious education (RE) have joined subject lead groups in the MAT, and the SEND leader leads the SEND group. Subject leads value the professional development opportunities, although most have not yet had the opportunity to work with colleagues back in school.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is led well. The SEND leader works closely with teachers and support staff across the school. Pupils with SEND are making good progress in English and stronger progress in mathematics than previously. The SEND leader has worked closely with the local authority to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. This has resulted in several pupils receiving successful placements at local specialist resource bases.
- Leaders monitor the attainment and progress of individual pupils and discuss these at regular pupil-progress meetings with class teachers. Leaders have ensured that teachers have the opportunity to moderate in-school assessments with colleagues and have used external testing to help inform their judgements. Consequently, leaders have a clear idea of what pupils' attainment and progress currently are.
- The pupil premium grant is used appropriately. A large proportion of it funds the work of the pastoral team, which successfully supports pupils across the school to access learning. It is also used well to fund disadvantaged pupils' participation in extra-curricular and cultural experiences within school. However, the impact of this funding is not evaluated against each project. Consequently, leaders are not as precise as they could be in terms of understanding what has the greatest positive impact.

- The sports and physical education (PE) premium is used well. External coaches work alongside teachers and support staff, developing their own expertise in delivering the curriculum. Specialist staff at lunchtime run a variety of activities, from balance games through to netball. Many pupils are physically active in this period. The funded after-school PE activities have a high take-up across the school, with all children having the opportunity to take part in these activities during the year.
- Leaders have recently introduced a broader curriculum to teach the arts, humanities and sciences. They are working alongside colleagues in the MAT to develop this. Teachers have growing confidence to deliver a knowledge- and vocabulary-rich curriculum, but this is still at an early stage.
- Understanding of fundamental British values is developed through the school's RE curriculum and demonstrated in the way pupils behave towards each other. Pupils do not accept discrimination in any form. They respect each other's views and are learning about different cultures.

Governance of the school

- Until recently, governors were reliant on school leaders to inform them about strengths and weaknesses. They have worked closely with the MAT to develop their skills in holding school leaders to account.
- Governors are known to the school community. Several have a 'buddy' class, which they regularly visit and even join on school trips. Governors undertake monitoring visits and discuss current school improvement initiatives with school leaders. They then discuss key findings at LGB meetings.
- Alongside school leaders, the governors have not always been as evaluative as they could have been about the impact of school funding.
- MAT leaders were less directly involved in the school's work after a year of positive results in 2017. However, when it became apparent that this improvement was not sustainable, they quickly established improvement plans. These rapid improvement plans, alongside regular support from the MAT primary lead, have had a noticeable impact on the quality and quantity of work in pupils' books.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has recently changed, but the two deputy DSLs have ensured that the transition has happened smoothly. The deputy DSLs are also the pastoral practitioners and so work closely with some of the pupils with emotional and social needs, and their families, on a daily basis. The deputy DSLs make highly effective use of the positive relationships already in place with parents to support any pupils whose welfare is a concern.
- All staff have received appropriate training. Concerns about pupils are passed on quickly to one of the DSLs and dealt with in an appropriate and timely way.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to talk to if they were to feel unsafe. They are taught to keep themselves safe both when out and about and when online.

- All appropriate checks on adults who are regularly in the school are carried out by the school and the MAT. This information is checked by a governor, the chief executive officer and external auditors.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There have been substantial changes to the teaching staff within the last year. Despite this, they work closely as a team. Newly qualified teachers report that they are well supported by colleagues. The newly qualified teachers have been able to access mentoring and peer coaching from senior leaders and this has improved the quality of their teaching, as evidenced by pupils' work.
- There have been many different initiatives introduced in recent times, with the aim of improving standards. However, this has led to confusion among teachers, with different projects having wide-ranging priorities. Staff reported in the staff survey that these many initiatives have also led to unacceptable workloads to fulfil all the demands. Leaders are aware of the need to streamline school improvement and instead have a high-quality focus on fewer key areas.
- There are strengths across the school in teaching, but there are also currently too many areas where teaching is not producing good learning over time.
- In mathematics, a focus has been developing reasoning skills. Different teachers have interpreted this in different ways, leading to a lack of consistency in what leaders are trying to achieve. The most able are given challenges in mathematics, but activities set are not always clearly linked to the teaching provided. The pupils in upper key stage 2 are not working at the standard that they should be and have a poor grasp of their times tables.
- In English, leaders have introduced systems to help pupils challenge themselves in their writing. However, these are not used consistently well across classes to stretch the most able, and activities are sometimes too easy for these pupils. Where these systems are also used in RE, history and geography, pupils have produced good pieces of extended writing. Again, practice is inconsistent, and not all pupils have the opportunity to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Phonics teaching is effective, as evidenced by the school's success in preparing pupils for the Year 1 phonics check. However, writing skills in Reception and Year 1 are below where they should be because children and pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise.
- Science teaching has also been identified as an area for development by leaders. Teachers have begun to develop pupils' investigative skills and the use of scientific vocabulary in writing, but it is at an early stage.
- This academic year, teachers have made developing pupils' pride in their work and presentation skills a priority, and this was part of the focus of the MAT's rapid improvement plans on quality and quantity of work. There has been a noticeable improvement in pupils' handwriting since September in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2. Teachers are continuing to work with pupils on their presentation in mathematics.
- Support staff work well with pupils with high levels of SEND. They enable them to make good progress, particularly in English.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a high level of respect for each other. They have discussions in class, listening carefully to each other's views.
- Leaders use the school's Catholic faith as a basis for encouraging respect, joy, love for each other, forgiveness and other values, on an ongoing basis. Pupils can talk about what these values mean. They are encouraged to reflect on their Christian values through collective worship sessions. They learn about other faiths and cultures, developing respect for others.
- There are strong links with the local church. Local priests run masses for each class in turn weekly. Pupils feel close to the Catholic faith as part of this, and it is appreciated by families who share that faith. In reflecting on how they had felt special, one child stated that she felt special when chosen to carry the cross.
- Pupils' welfare is of high priority. All classes use the school's chosen pastoral approach, and teachers take time to get to know pupils as individuals. Those pupils who do need additional support with their emotional or social needs receive this from a dedicated pastoral team. They are then successful in accessing the main class lessons.
- Pupils' wider experience of the world is also of key importance. Leaders and teachers arrange for an array of visitors and trips out. Pupils take part in opera projects, learn musical instruments and visit places of interest.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- As pupils move around the school site, they are sensible and calm. At breaktime and lunchtime, they play together, often taking part in organised activities.
- In classes, pupils are generally well focused. When there is low-level misbehaviour, it does not disrupt others and is dealt with quickly by class teachers.
- Pupils feel safe. They are confident that where there might be pupils who tease them or annoy them, staff will deal with this. A minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying on Parent View, Ofsted's online parent survey, but this was not borne out by inspection findings. Systems for monitoring behaviour and analysing trends have recently been introduced, but it is not yet possible to measure the impact of these.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The level of persistent absence has increased recently, but this can be attributed to specific pupil groups. Leaders are working closely with these groups to increase their attendance. They have only recently started tracking attendance patterns across the school, so this has limited impact so far.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress of pupils from key stage 1 to key stage 2 in 2018 was below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. The same group's attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below the expected standard.
- Despite higher attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017, over three years the average attainment of pupils has been below the expected standard. Progress in reading from key stage 1 to key stage 2 has been below the national average for those three years.
- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment is also lower than the national averages. At the end of the early years, the percentage of children who achieve a good level of development is below the national average.
- The school has prepared pupils well for the phonics check at the end of Year 1, with more than the national average achieving the expected standard in 2018. Pupils apply their phonics knowledge to decode words. Reading is celebrated, and all pupils visit the recently improved library weekly.
- The school's own assessments and pupils' work show that pupils are now making stronger progress from their starting points. However, not enough are yet at the expected standard for their age. Disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to their peers.
- Pupils with SEND are making good progress from their own starting points, particularly in English.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leaders have identified that children who enter the early years often have poor speech and language. They have prioritised improving speaking and listening across the curriculum. Consequently, there are high-quality interactions through the day between children and adults, whether they are playing outside, doing art and craft inside or role playing.
- The large and well-appointed outside area provides many opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills. They climb, play on scooters and bikes, balance on stilts and build with blocks and sand. There are also quieter places, such as a den, where children can take reading books to share with a friend. Children are encouraged to take appropriate risks, such as climbing a tree.
- The focus on knowledge in the older year groups is also begun in the early years. During the inspection, children were not just learning about 'people who help us' but also through the historical context of the Great Fire of London. Staff set out many activities that enabled children to explore this theme – building fire engines, painting and crafts with different materials and role play of a hospital. Children were using key words they had learned in these contexts in their play, such as 'pulse'.
- Children's early reading, writing and mathematics skills are not as well developed as they could be. Opportunities to extend children's writing beyond simple words have not been developed. Very few children access activities set out to develop their literacy and

mathematics skills in the outside continuous provision. There are not enough opportunities for children to develop their number knowledge. Consequently, some children are not making the progress in early reading, writing and mathematics that they could be. Children's work showed that few children are well on track to meet the early learning goals in these areas.

- Children behave well in the early years. They take turns using toys and keep themselves safe when using the equipment outside. They are independent and put on and take off their own waterproofs and wellies.
- Staff have a good understanding of how well children are doing, as a result of their well-established assessment systems. The early years leader works closely with her team to identify where there are key gaps in children's learning and then staff plan activities to help address these.
- Children who have specific learning needs are well supported to make strong progress in the early years setting.

School details

Unique reference number	142737
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10086781

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Edward Acton
Interim Headteacher	Alan Williams
Telephone number	01493 445117
Website	www.smspprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@smspprimary.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the St John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. Trustees have responsibility for the school, but there is also a local governing body.
- The school is also part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in May 2013.
- There is an above-average proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- There is an above-average proportion of pupils who receive SEND support.
- There is an above-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in every class. Some of these observations were undertaken alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by the inspection team.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body and MAT. They met with senior and subject leaders. The responses to the staff survey were considered.
- Two groups of pupils met with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke to pupils informally in lessons and at playtimes and heard them read.
- The inspection team scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including assessment information, the improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation.
- The 19 responses to Parent View were considered. The inspection team also spoke to some parents before school.

Inspection team

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Declan McCarthy

Ofsted Inspector

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