

# Surfleet Primary School

Station Road, Surfleet, Spalding PE11 4DB

<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 April 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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 very capable executive headteacher and highly skilled head of school work closely with the sharply focused governing body to provide strong strategic direction to the school.
- The leaders' empowering use of the widened range of staff skills across the collaboration of schools has brought rapid improvement in teaching and pupils' achievements.
- Senior leaders check the performance of the school very effectively. They have an accurate view of how teaching impacts on pupils' progress and rigorously hold leaders and staff at all levels to account in bringing further improvement.
- Staff provide high-quality care and are vigilant in safeguarding pupils. Senior staff liaise efficiently with outside agencies and parents to secure the welfare of pupils considered vulnerable.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers in all classes question pupils effectively to probe and develop pupils' knowledge. They adjust work accurately to challenge pupils at the right level and sustain their good progress.
- Adults and pupils share outstandingly respectful relationships; consequently, pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. Pupils also relate extremely well towards each other. Consequently, those new to the school also make many friends, enjoy school and feel safe.
- Standards are rising quickly throughout the school, especially in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and in pupils' vocabulary, speaking and basic number skills. These show the good progress that all groups of pupils make during their time in this school.
- Children experience a successful start in the combined Reception and Year 1 class, learning equally effectively in the well-equipped inside and outdoor areas.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, pupils do not take enough responsibility for improving their writing and mathematics when responding to teachers' marking.
- Pupils' handwriting skills are not yet emphasised and developed well enough.
- On occasion, children in the early years are not given enough opportunity to further develop early writing skills when undertaking their self-chosen learning activities.

## Full report

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

- Build on the improvements in pupils' achievements in writing and mathematics by ensuring that teachers:
  - ensure that pupils, in line with the school's marking policy, respond more fully to the written advice given in their books so that they deepen their understanding and take greater responsibility for making their work as good it can be
  - more consistently develop and insist on high standards of pupils' handwriting
  - make further use of improved early years facilities and provide more opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills as they undertake their self-chosen activities.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken the bold steps needed to improve the structures of leadership and management and to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The executive headteacher provides determined, well-informed and empowering leadership. He has established a strong partnership with a very skilled head of school and experienced and knowledgeable governors.
- As a team, leaders have utilised colleagues' expertise across the collaboration of schools and have restored an effective school where consistently good teaching is increasingly accelerating pupils' progress. They demonstrate a secure capacity to bring further improvement, as exemplified in their relentless effort to ensure that new assessment procedures accurately identify and help to quicken pupils' progress.
- All the parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and those interviewed by the inspector would recommend the school to other parents. They also welcome the way the school has managed change to sustain good improvement since the previous inspection.
- Leaders rigorously check the work of the school and have an accurate view of its strengths and where further improvement is still required. The executive headteacher gives a strong lead in identifying the right priorities for improvement, managing staff performance and tackling underachievement. He is well-supported by the head of school in holding staff to account for improving their skills and pupils' progress. This has led to changes in staff; improved teaching, especially of phonics; and higher standards of pupils' achievement across the school.
- Strengthening leadership at all levels has remained central to the school's future improvement, especially developing middle leadership roles. Middle leaders are already contributing well to the school's effectiveness, for example, in early years and special educational needs. However, some are relatively new to their responsibilities and their actions have not been in place long enough to secure outstanding practice across the school.
- Leaders and teachers have worked effectively to establish a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. They sustain a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic numeracy and literacy skills. They ensure that pupils' interest is stimulated through topics such as 'marvellous monarchs'. These link subjects together and also promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by teaching them about different lifestyles.
- Teachers are skilled in getting to know the pupils and are diligent in treating them with equal respect. Discrimination has no place within the caring community atmosphere that permeates through the school. This is additionally evident in the way increasing numbers of migrant pupils are warmly welcomed into the school.
- Teachers are diligent in celebrating the uniqueness of pupils' differing backgrounds to secure their good awareness of what it means to live in modern Britain. Elections of house captains and school council members are used to extend the pupils' understanding of democracy. Teachers also present stimulating displays to celebrate the diversity of the school community and to promote British values such as tolerance and respect.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability is used very effectively. They challenge staff to use their good knowledge of individual pupils to find innovative ways to ensure that these pupils learn as effectively as their peers.
- Leaders also make sure that pupils new to the school and those who speak English as an additional language receive equally effective support and make good progress.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have made excellent use of the widened skills across the collaboration of schools to bring radical improvements to the way the primary sports funding is utilised. The funding has been used to provide specialist teaching, to train staff and to introduce pupils to a wide variety of sports, competitions and extra sports clubs. There has been a large increase in pupils' participation and now over a third of the school are enhancing their skills and fitness through active involvement in new competitions and sports clubs, such as hockey and lacrosse.
- The local authority has provided good training for staff and governors and has supported the school well in strengthening the way it checks its performance and brings improvement.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors fulfil their duties very effectively. The governing body moved swiftly and decisively following the previous inspection to withdraw from an existing federation and to reconstitute to form a single

governing body. This key strategic move was also accompanied by the appointment of the current executive headteacher and the formation of a collaboration with two other schools. By these means the governors radically improved their ability to check the performance of the school and to hold leaders and staff to account. As a result, governors know the school well, have a clear view of how teaching affects the quality of pupils' progress and they undertake a much improved and now successful role in moving the school forward.

- Governors combine regular visits to the school with rigorous checking of the information about pupils' progress presented to them in senior staff leaders' reports and evidence from national assessments. As a result, governors know how well the school is doing and how it compares with other schools. In recent terms, governors have supported staff particularly effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those considered vulnerable are helped to progress as well as other pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. They are a strength of the school. Senior staff keep safeguarding policies up to date and ensure that they are implemented consistently. All staff are diligent in using their regular training and positive links with parents to keep pupils safe. Senior leaders also liaise very effectively with outside agencies and sustain a 'watching brief' to make sure that pupils considered vulnerable or at risk are protected from abuse.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Following changes in staff and strong guidance from senior leaders, teaching, learning and assessment have improved since the previous inspection and are now good.
- Leaders and teachers have increased their skills by sharing their expertise across the collaboration of schools. This has strengthened the way leaders check the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and has led to inconsistencies being rectified.
- In particular, teachers have improved the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' skills and the way in which they use the information to sharpen their planning and challenge pupils at the right level.
- Observations in all classes during the inspection revealed to the inspector the positive way in which pupils responded to the teachers' good questioning and learned well, relishing the lively challenges presented to them.
- Improved teaching is also underpinned by very supportive relationships between staff and pupils. These have raised pupils' confidence and interest in learning and promoted their good progress. For example, pupils in the Year 2, 3 and 4 class enjoyed relating their writing to a favourite 'Little red hen' story. They appreciated the effective way that adults questioned them and valued their ideas to extend their understanding of how to use an apostrophe correctly.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have made effective use of training to establish a consistent approach in developing pupils' understanding of how to blend letters' sounds to read words. As a result, good teaching of phonics represents another significant improvement that has improved pupils' learning and quickened their progress since the previous inspection.
- Teachers and teaching assistants collaborate well to ensure that pupils across the range of abilities, including those new to the school, receive effective additional support to promote their learning. Adults provide an effective mix of in-class, small group and individual guidance, swiftly identify when pupils' progress slows and provide focused support to ensure that they catch up.
- Teachers consistently provide good oral guidance so that pupils know what they are learning and what they need to improve. Pupils correct the mistakes identified when teachers mark work, but there is some inconsistency in the way teachers apply the school's updated marking policy. This means that the pupils' ability to self-reflect and improve work for themselves is not fully developed, limiting progress.
- Teachers set high expectations of well-presented work. As a result, for example, pupils say their confidence and ability to solve problems in mathematics are lifted by setting their 'working-out' neatly.
- Teachers also encourage pupils to take pride in their work and this has contributed well to the pupils' much improved ability to write expressively and extensively. For example, pupils enjoyed exchanging ideas to add detail when writing a biography of the life of Queen Elizabeth II. However, teachers do not always place sufficient emphasis on developing the pupils' handwriting skills. At times this limits the ability of some pupils to write and express their ideas more fluently and make faster progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The pupils respect their teachers and quickly stop what they are doing and pay attention when asked to do so.
- A few pupils still need timely reminders to concentrate more on their work and to stop the chatter, but the vast majority are increasingly showing pride in their work. Overall, the pupils' positive attitudes and improved determination to learn well are quickening their progress.
- Pupils welcome and engage well in the frequent opportunities to undertake additional responsibilities. For example, members of the school council and house captains explained how they help other pupils and organise charitable events to support people in the local and wider communities who need help.
- Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the much increased sporting opportunities offered to them and understand how teamwork helps them to achieve.
- All staff consistently follow the school's well-considered welfare and safeguarding procedures to care for the pupils and keep them safe in school and on trips out of school. For example, during the inspection the safety of pupils on a visit to a farm was supported by a careful assessment of the possible risks to be avoided. As a result, pupils agree that their teachers look after them well.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know how to stay safe and act supportively as peer mediators at breaktimes to help one another. Pupils are particularly keen to talk about how they use the school's much improved computers and how studying e-safety helps them to use computers safely.
- All the parents who responded to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, expressed the view that their children are kept safe and happy at school.
- The pupils' first-hand experience of welcoming pupils from different countries underpins their good awareness of Britain's multi-cultural community and respect for each other's backgrounds.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school courteously and sensibly. They react respectfully to the staff's good management of their behaviour.
- The school completes comprehensive records of pupils' behaviour and welfare needs. Records show a reducing number of incidents of inappropriate behaviour over the past year with very few of a serious nature and none requiring exclusion.
- Records also show that the small number of pupils who need additional support for their emotional and behavioural needs respond well to the guidance they receive.
- Pupils, staff and parents readily confirm that behaviour has improved in recent years.
- Pupils know about the different forms that bullying might take. They confidently state that, 'There is no bullying here' and quickly add that, 'If it did happen then teachers would sort it out very quickly.'
- The leader's diligence in checking and promoting attendance, and in liaising well with parents, has reduced persistent absence. Attendance now matches the national average and continues to rise.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Observations of pupils' responses in class, their work in books and of the school's own checks of their developing skills show that they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils progress well in relation to their differing needs and abilities during their time in this school. Pupils' good progress stems from consistently effective teaching and is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2015 was in line with that found nationally and represented a good improvement compared to the previous year. Pupils' performance in writing still lagged behind their achievement in reading and mathematics and reflected some of the past underachievement identified at the time of the previous inspection.
- Teachers are tackling past deficiencies effectively by more accurately identifying and bridging gaps in pupils' basic skills. This is proving successful and there is, for example, a strong and regular focus on embedding pupils' number and spelling skills and raising expectations, thus quickening pupils' progress.

- Past differences in the progress of boys compared to girls evident in national assessments no longer exist. This is because weaknesses in boys' learning have been tackled well. For example, teachers in all classes present topics that stimulate boys' and girls' interests equally effectively.
- The teaching of phonics and subsequently pupils' phonics understanding and early reading skills have also been significantly improved over the past 18 months.
- Staff across the collaboration of schools have shared and developed their expertise and staff in the school have received effective training. As a result, pupils' scores in the phonics screening checks at the end of Years 1 and 2 have noticeably increased.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the expected level in the phonics check matched that found nationally. Current school information shows a picture of accelerated improvement that is set to continue.
- Pupils in all classes show an interest in books and are advancing their skill well in response to regular reading in class and at home. By the end of Year 6 a large majority of pupils, especially those who have spent most time in this school, read fluently and confidently to learn and for pleasure.
- Although pupils' writing is improving well, particularly their ability to write extensively and imaginatively, handwriting remains less-well developed. At times, some pupils do not form or join letters legibly and this constrains their ability and that of others to check the quality of their writing. This slows progress.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Pupils are setting out their work in books logically and neatly. They are responding well to teachers' good questioning and are deepening their understanding and quickening their progress by explaining their strategies for solving problems.
- In lessons, all pupils respond well when asked to discuss their ideas, especially when presented with challenges. In particular, the most-able pupils enjoy giving the reasons for their views and this is underpinning improved and now good progress in English as well as mathematics. In the Year 4, 5 and 6 class, for example, pupils relished explaining how they decoded Roman numerals to solve mathematical problems.
- Pupils also make good progress in other subjects and are well prepared for future learning by the time they leave the school. Their enthusiasm when using computers to research historical topics and during sports, for example, further illustrate their good levels of skill and understanding.
- Disadvantaged pupils in receipt of additional pupil premium support now make progress which is at least as good as that of other pupils in the school and nationally in mathematics and reading. Increasingly, they make good progress in writing too. As other pupils, they now benefit from accurate checks of their skills and from activities such as the breakfast and after-school clubs to boost their confidence and readiness to learn. As a result, across the school any gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates are systematically closed.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants carefully check the pupils' developing skills and get to know them well. Adults use the information gathered to ensure that the support and work set for the pupils suitably addresses their needs and also presents the degree of challenge needed to extend their understanding.
- Pupils who enter school other than at the normal time and speak English as an additional language are warmly received and benefit from the well-planned individual adult attention given to them. Initially, many are supported by additional funding and although a few do not reach expected levels of attainment for their age, they make good progress during their time in this school. Most make rapid progress in learning to speak English and this boosts their confidence and ability to learn well across the range of other subjects.

## Early years provision

is good

- Strengthened and now good leadership, teaching and resourcing in the Reception and Year 1 class have successfully improved children's learning since the previous inspection.
- The staff give high regard to children's welfare and personal development. They implement the school's safeguarding and welfare procedures very effectively to keep children safe.
- The class teacher and teaching assistant liaise very closely with staff in the on-site pre-school and cultivate strong and encouraging links with parents. All the parents who spoke with the inspector expressed high regard for the way children are welcomed and inducted into school. As a result, children make a confident start to full-time schooling and quickly learn how to cooperate and play supportively with each other.

- Adults continually model good behaviour and establish warm and supportive relationships with the children. Consequently, the children behave well, enjoy each other's company and learn well together. For example, children were observed excitedly talking about their newly hatched chicks during the inspection.
- The staff provide a wide variety of learning experiences both inside and, more recently, outdoors. They plan them purposefully to stimulate the children's interest and promote good progress.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The new leader of the early years works closely with the teaching assistant. They question the children purposefully to assess the children's developing skills and understanding accurately.
- Early years staff make sure that the information gathered is used to plan a broad and well-balanced curriculum and to structure work that takes advantage of children's own interests and stimulates their learning. For example, during the inspection children were observed learning and playing happily together and sharing their interests in the 'down on the farm' topic area.
- A scrutiny of children's work recorded electronically and in books shows this purposeful progression in their learning and also illustrates the way parents are increasingly contributing to their children's successful learning.
- The teacher provides a well-balanced range of adult-led work and activities chosen by the children themselves. Recent and considerable enhancement of the outdoor facilities now means that children can continue meaningful learning both indoors and outside.
- Occasionally, children's early writing skills are not emphasised enough, especially during their self-chosen activities. For example, when children enthusiastically discovered and dug up 'farm animals' in the sandpit, they were not encouraged to record their findings.
- Even so, adults know the children well and ensure that strong teaching of reading, phonics and number, for example, targets the children's differing needs and builds on previous learning and experiences.
- The range and levels of children's skills on entry vary from year to year within the small year groups. Over time, skills are broadly typical for their age, but are often lower in literacy, language and numeracy skills.
- In recent years an increasing number of children achieve a good level of development. Currently a most able group of children are benefiting from strong teaching, for example of phonics, and make effective use of the much improved outdoor facilities to demonstrate above-average skills for their age.
- This academic year, in response to good leadership and teaching, boys have improved their progress and now achieve as well as girls.
- By the time they leave Reception, children are well prepared for future learning in Year 1.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120419
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001824

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	87
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michelle Sacks
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Tom Verity
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15–16 October 2013

## Information about this school

- This primary school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are from White British backgrounds. About one fifth of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a similar proportion of pupils also speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- Children experience early years provision on a full-time basis in a combined Reception and Year 1 class. Pupils in other year groups are also taught in mixed-age classes.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal times. This includes an increasing number of pupils from other countries. Most have English as an additional language. Some have experienced little previous schooling and can speak little or no English when they enter school. The majority of these pupils join the school later than the normal time and some spend a relatively short time in this school before moving on to other settings.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school works cooperatively in collaboration with two other primary schools. This represents a significant change in the leadership of the school since the previous inspection when the school was federated with a different primary school.
- Currently, the work of the school is overseen by an executive headteacher and a single governing body. Leadership is also supported by a head of school.
- The current executive headteacher is leaving at the end of this term and a new executive headteacher has been appointed to commence his duties in September.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons and saw the work of three teachers. He was accompanied by the executive headteacher during these visits to lessons.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school's analysis of how well it is improving. The inspector examined the school's systems for checking progress and records of checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspector talked to individual pupils and a representative group of pupils about the school and their work. He listened to individual pupils read and attended an assembly and breakfast and after-school clubs. The inspector also looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes.
- The inspector held a meeting with members of the governing body and held meetings with school staff – mainly senior and middle leaders. He also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in the 10 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and in 10 staff and 11 pupils' questionnaires. He gathered the views of several parents during informal meetings at the school during the inspection.
- The school's use of the primary physical education and sport funding and the pupil premium were also considered.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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