

Fritcham Primary Academy

Church Road, Fritcham, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6BU

Inspection dates

20–21 April 2017

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the inspection of the predecessor school, leaders acknowledge that the quality of education declined. Now the school is rapidly improving and is good.
- School leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a strong capacity for further improvement.
- Leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Pupils in need of additional support achieve well both personally and academically.
- New subject leaders contribute well to school improvement. However, it is too early to assess the impact of their work on accelerating pupils' progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for very well. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other and adults.
- Pupils are proud of their school and behave well. Pupils learn in a happy, caring and purposeful environment.
- Parents are highly supportive of the work of the school.
- The teaching of reading is strong. Pupils achieve well in acquiring the skills of reading and develop an enjoyment and mature understanding of texts.
- Children start well in the Reception Year. They are provided with interesting and creative learning activities. Children make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Leaders make sure that there are effective child protection arrangements in place.
- Most-able pupils are not sufficiently well challenged in mathematics. Consequently, fewer reach the higher standard by the end of key stage 2.
- Teachers do not provide enough regular opportunities for pupils to edit and redraft their writing so that they can make even faster progress. This is particularly the case in lower key stage 2.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation varies. Adults do not reinforce good habits regularly enough for younger pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by:
 - increasing the number of pupils who reach the higher standard in mathematics by the end of key stage 2
 - accelerating the progress pupils make in lower key stage 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - adults insisting on the highest quality of presentation and handwriting in pupils' work so that there is consistency across the school, starting in early years
 - providing pupils with opportunities to edit and redraft their writing so that they can demonstrate their capabilities to the full.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of new subject leaders by ensuring that they precisely check pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- This school converted to an academy in 2014. Its predecessor school had been graded as outstanding in 2012 and was exempt from routine inspections. Leaders have not ensured that the quality of education has remained outstanding since the inspection of the predecessor school.
- Since September 2016, the new executive headteacher has brought a renewed sense of vision, values and clear direction. She is ensuring that the school improves at pace. Some parents commented, 'The relationships with parents and pupils have much improved in the school.'
- The executive headteacher has created a purposeful environment where pupils thrive and learn well. She ensures that there is a constant focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and providing opportunities so that every pupil can succeed. One parent summed up the view of many when she said, 'She is so approachable.'
- School leaders and governors have a precise understanding of the quality of education provided. They have successfully focused on improving behaviour and adults' consistency in promoting positive attitudes to learning. Alongside the improvement in behaviour, leaders and new staff continue to ensure that pupils currently on roll make accelerated progress in their learning.
- Leaders track the progress of every pupil regularly, considering the provision for pupils carefully if they are in danger of falling behind. A significant proportion of pupils start midway through their primary education, which can affect the pace at which they can make progress. The longer pupils attend Fritcham Primary Academy, the quicker they progress. Pupils who have been at the school throughout their education make sustained progress in their learning.
- School leaders provide a broad and balanced curriculum which interests pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils have opportunity to practise their practical skills in subjects such as science. However, the standard of work pupils produce in subjects such as history and geography is not yet of the same quality as in English and mathematics.
- The core curriculum is enhanced by additional visits and trips, such as visiting Norwich cathedral or participating in singing events with other schools in the trust. Pupils particularly enjoy the regular opportunities they receive to learn with other pupils from their partner school. These well-organised days are highly successful, and pupils commented how much they benefit from working with others of the same age.
- New subject leaders are enthusiastic about their roles and responsibilities. The executive headteacher has increased leadership capacity by utilising the expertise across the two partner schools. Currently, subject leaders have accurate action plans with clear priorities but do not yet regularly check the progress pupils make in every subject area, as well as in English and mathematics.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and demonstrate the school's values and ethos

consistently well. Leaders provide staff with high-quality training and resources so that they can carry out their roles and responsibilities well.

- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are kind and tolerant of each other's differences. They reflect the Christian ethos and values of the school well. In assemblies, pupils reflect maturely on the needs of others around the world and respond appropriately and respectfully when reciting the Lord's Prayer.
- Leadership of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly strong. The inclusive ethos and equality of opportunity is highly evident, and staff meet the individual needs of pupils very well. Staff know when to intervene and when to let pupils 'have a go' for themselves. These pupils achieve well, making good progress both personally and academically in a caring environment.
- The additional funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used creatively and well. The executive headteacher has accurately identified the barriers for learning and ensures that the money is used effectively to provide opportunities for these pupils to excel.
- Primary sports funding is used and monitored very effectively. Pupils receive high-quality sports education so that they develop their skills well. For example, Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to learn how to sail. Staff also benefit from additional coaching so that they enhance their own skills and subject knowledge.
- The executive headteacher holds all staff to account well for the progress pupils make through a systematic approach to performance management. She regularly checks the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, providing support when required. Staff targets are robust, and leaders ensure that staff make the most of the training opportunities provided by the trust.
- Parents spoken to during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and how the executive headteacher and staff ensure that their children settle well and are safe and happy. One parent commented, 'I am so pleased with how my children have settled.'
- School leaders and governors appreciate the support they receive from being part of the trust. The trust works closely with school leaders, providing further challenge and training so that the provision for pupils improves and sustains.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is effective in its work. Governors are ambitious and well informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. They visit regularly to evaluate the quality of the information they receive and are accurate in their evaluation of the school's performance.
- Under the guidance of the experienced chair of governors, the governing body carries out its statutory duties well. Minutes show that governors spend time on the important matters of raising pupils' achievement and keeping pupils safe and well cared for.
- The financial management of the school meets statutory requirements. Governors have a clear strategy for the effective use of the pupil premium and other additional funding

that appropriately meets the needs of the pupils. They ensure that the physical education and sports premium supports and improves the number of pupils who access sporting activities both during and after school.

- The school's website is kept up to date with all relevant information so that parents can access any information required.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that statutory child protection training and policies are in place. All staff are alert to their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. Adults receive regular useful updates from the headteacher, who is responsible for this aspect of the school's work.
- Child protection records are kept well and demonstrate that leaders follow through concerns to ensure that pupils at risk are cared for well.
- Processes and procedures for the recruitment of staff are compliant with current legislation. New staff are provided with effective induction so that they quickly settle into the routines and expectations of school leaders and governors.
- The academy trust regularly checks the school's work on safeguarding to satisfy the trustees that all the necessary documentation is in good order. School leaders are quick to respond to feedback and act on the appropriate guidance provided from audits.
- Adults teach pupils strategies for keeping themselves safe. Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe. Older pupils explained how school staff had taught them about keeping safe on the internet and how to use mobile phones safely and positively during a recent internet safety day. Pupils are confident that an adult at school would listen and help them if they had any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of what individual pupils can achieve. Strong teaching over time is now leading to good progress. Most pupils achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Teachers focus on the needs and interests of individual pupils in their class. Inspection evidence, including the school's wide range of assessment records and work in pupils' exercise books, confirms this.
- Teachers use the assessment information they have increasingly well to plan learning activities that are interesting and make pupils think deeply. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils were using laptops to research their own information about animals and their habitats. Pupils then used this information to write a report. Through her careful and precise explanations, the teacher ensured that pupils produced reports that were of a good quality.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils are confident and able to communicate their ideas using appropriate vocabulary clearly and well. Examples seen during the inspection included

pupils reading aloud their writing in class and also reading their work to parents and pupils during a celebration assembly.

- The teaching of reading is strong. Adults ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. The youngest pupils in Reception confidently recommended books they had chosen from the school library to pupils in Years 1 and 2. They ably explained about the author and illustrator and enthused others about the characters in the stories. Older pupils who read to the inspector gave their opinions and reasons thoughtfully for their choice of books.
- Specialist teachers often lead in subjects such as music and physical education. This has helped pupils improve their knowledge, interest and skills in a wider curriculum.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, whether working one-to-one with pupils, in small groups or with a whole class when they assist the teacher.
- Pupils told the inspector that they like writing. One boy stated, 'I just enjoy writing stories.' Nevertheless, adults do not routinely insist upon or demonstrate the highest standard of presentation and handwriting. Young pupils are not developing the habit of forming letters correctly and this is having a negative impact on the standard of handwriting of the older pupils. Older pupils are now challenging themselves to improve the quality of their handwriting and some are achieving much better results.
- Teachers do not always use time systematically enough in lessons in the mixed-age classes. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunity to edit and redraft their work so that they can make even better progress in writing, especially in lower key stage 2.
- Teachers explain mathematical concepts accurately. Consequently, pupils understand what they need to do in the lesson and little time is wasted. Pupils focus on their work and want to achieve well. However, the most able pupils are not moved on rapidly enough to use and apply their skills in different and interesting ways.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are nurtured and their contributions to promoting the values of the school are celebrated regularly and well.
- Pupils are proud of their school and welcome new pupils that join them. They are quick to make friends and are happy. One pupil confirmed the view of many by saying, 'Being a small school, you know everyone. Everyone is friendly here.'
- Pupils explained that they are happy to speak with an adult at school if they have any worries or concerns.
- While behaviour is good, pupils in lower key stage 2 are still building their resilience in learning. At times, they require an adult to help them persevere with their learning, so that pupils complete activities to the high standards of which they are capable.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is much improved and is good. Adults and pupils stated that this has not always been the case in the past.
- In previous years, it has been necessary for leaders to exclude a few individuals for a fixed term. Over this academic year, school leaders have introduced a whole-school approach to managing behaviour. As a result, both exclusions and the number of disruptive or poor behaviour incidents have reduced.
- Adults manage behaviour positively and well. Pupils understand the school's rewards and consequences systems clearly. During the inspection, no disruption to learning was seen in lessons. Pupils' conduct was highly positive. They show high levels of respect to each other and adults throughout the school day.
- Pupils are polite and very proud of their school and their learning. They are pleased to show their work and talk about their learning.
- At lunchtime and playtimes, behaviour is suitably energetic. Friendships and good relations are highly evident. Pupils respond well to adults' instructions and are keen to stay 'in the green' so that they earn their weekly and termly rewards.
- For the vast majority of pupils, attendance at school is above that found nationally. School leaders take swift and appropriate action to improve the attendance of the very few who do not attend as well as they should.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' individual starting points vary widely from year to year. Children enter the school with individual skills that are below or similar to those typical of their age. They make good progress and often every child reaches at least a good level of development.
- Due to the mixed-age classes, children move easily into Year 1, where they rapidly build on their knowledge of phonics already established in Reception. Pupils sound and blend unfamiliar words quickly and build words using phonics to help them. As a result, in 2016, when their phonic knowledge is checked in Year 1, every pupil met the expected standard. This is expected to continue this year.
- With small numbers of pupils in each year group, comparisons with national data on pupils' attainment are not always reliable. Outcomes can fluctuate widely from year to year, depending on the academic profile of each year group and the numbers of pupils who start partway through their primary education. However, the longer pupils attend, the faster they catch up and close gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- In 2016, in key stage 1, pupils achieved in line with national averages in reading and mathematics. Their achievement in writing was below that found nationally. Currently, these pupils are starting to make better progress in their work.
- At the end of the Year 6 in 2016, there were too few disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to compare their performance with that of others nationally. Across the school, these pupils are well cared for and their needs are accurately identified and met. Their progress is good and often better.

- The most able pupils enjoy the challenge they receive. However, in mathematics, the most able pupils do not consistently experience enough variety to challenge their thinking so that they can work more frequently at the higher standard.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start very well at Flitcham Primary Academy. Adults plan learning activities that are interesting and support children's personal development well.
- Leadership in the early years is effective. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and conduct. Children respond well and work collaboratively and establish good relationships with their classmates.
- The small outdoor area is used as well and as creatively as possible to enhance the learning experience. Leaders have firm plans to develop the area further so that children can have more opportunity to develop their physical skills.
- Children develop their imaginative play safely and creatively in a number of ways. During the inspection, the children were enthusiastically acting out the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. 'Fee-fi-fo-fum, here I come!' exclaimed one child. The adult carefully and effectively questioned the children about the story as they planted beans together.
- While teaching is good overall, adults sometimes do not expect enough precision from the children when practising their writing, particularly those who are most able. Consequently, children are not developing their handwriting skills as well or as fast as they could.
- Staff have strong relationships with parents. Even though children begin school from a number of different settings, adults ensure that parents are welcome and quickly feel part of the school community. Many parents attend the weekly assemblies to see their children celebrate and sing alongside the older pupils.
- Adults use children's learning journeys effectively to show the wealth of learning children experience. There is much evidence to show that children make rapid progress in many areas of the early years curriculum and make at least good progress from their individual starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	141050
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10031405

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Linda Parker
Headteacher	Jane Gardener
Telephone number	01485 600383
Website	www.flitcham.dneat.org
Email address	head@flitcham.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- Flitcham Primary Academy is a much smaller than average primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. A significant number of pupils join and leave the school outside normal times.
- The school converted to an academy in July 2014. The sponsor is the Diocese of Norwich Educations and Academies Trust (DNEAT).
- Since the school became an academy, there has been a leadership change. In September 2016, the executive headteacher joined the school and a partnership was formed with Sandringham and West Newton Primary School, which is a maintained school.
- The proportion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. Due to the small numbers, the Department for Education data information is suppressed for groups.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching over time. This included observing pupils learning in all classes, all of which were jointly seen with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with pupils and looked at their books to take account of the work that has been completed over time and the progress that pupils make.
- Some pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to the inspector and talked about their books. The inspector observed the teaching of reading in small groups during lessons.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and head of school, subject leaders, governors and representatives of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the governing body.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were examined. The inspector evaluated the checks school leaders make when employing staff.
- The views of 25 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire were taken into account, as well as a number of informal conversations with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Kim Hall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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