

Louth Eastfield Infants' and Nursery School

Lacey Gardens, Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 8DQ

Inspection dates

20–21 February 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not acted with enough urgency to address the recent slow progress and low attainment made by some pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The governing body have not effectively challenged school leaders regarding pupils' low outcomes.
- Leaders' development plans do not contain sufficient information for the governing body to hold them fully to account for their actions.
- Middle and subject leaders have not received appropriate training and support to help them carry out their roles as effectively as they could.
- Staff do not have high enough expectations of what pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities can achieve.
- Teacher's use of assessment information is inconsistent. Pupils are not always appropriately challenged.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with frequent enough opportunities to practise grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills in longer pieces of writing across the curriculum.
- The teaching of reading is not yet good because there is no consistent approach to the teaching of phonics.
- Children in the early years do not make fast enough progress. There are too few opportunities for children to develop phonics, reading and writing skills.
- Staff in the early years have not ensured that parents and carers contribute frequently enough to the online assessment tool.

The school has the following strengths

- The vast majority of parents told inspectors that children are happy, safe and well cared for.
- There is a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils benefit from a variety of educational visits.
- Pupils' conduct is good. They are polite and behave well when in classrooms, corridors and outside at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Systems to ensure that pupils are safe and well protected are secure and effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - action planning at all levels contains precise actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities, therefore allowing governors to hold leaders to account
 - the role of all leaders is developed so they are able to have a positive impact on outcomes in their area of responsibility
 - governors use pupil progress information and other monitoring records to hold leaders to account.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics improve rapidly by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information accurately to plan activities that appropriately challenge all pupils
 - staff have higher expectations of what pupils, including disadvantaged and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities can achieve
 - teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write at length in order to practise grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills in English and other subjects
 - a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics is used throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of the early years by ensuring that:
 - children have more frequent opportunities to apply phonic knowledge in writing
 - the learning environments provide increased opportunities for children to develop reading and writing skills
 - parents frequently contribute to the online assessment system so that next steps in learning can be planned for carefully.

External reviews of governance and pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and the governing body have not acted swiftly enough to address some pupils' recent slow progress and poor attainment. There has been a lack of urgency by leaders to ensure that these pupils leave the school having caught up with national expectations.
- The governing body has not held leaders fully to account for the recent poor performance of some pupils. This is because school development planning at all levels does not contain concise enough actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities. Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors have not always asked questions or challenged leaders effectively regarding the low outcomes for these pupils.
- Middle and subject leaders have not received sufficient training and professional development opportunities in order to discharge their duties to full effect. Senior leaders do not check the impact of their actions closely enough. Consequently, they cannot be sure if their plans are making a difference to pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects including art, design and technology, geography and history. Pupils in Year 2 were particularly enjoying learning about seed dispersal in science.
- Leaders responsible for the pupil premium and for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have ensured that the extra funding is suitably allocated and monitored. Pupils receive extra support in, for example, speech and language therapy, as well as in reading, writing and mathematics. This support is helping some pupils to catch up. However, not all pupils are making the rapid progress they need to.
- The leader responsible for the physical education and sport funding has ensured that pupils have received specialist coaching in a wide variety of sports. There has also been an increase in pupil participation rates through multi-skills and lunch clubs. The leader is aware that a next step for the school is to introduce inter-school competitions.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strong. Pupils are developing their understanding of faiths and cultures different to their own and learning British values including tolerance and respect. Consequently, pupils are being prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority has supported leaders in, for example, improving the early years, making judgements around the quality of teaching, carrying out work scrutiny and tracking pupil progress. This support has not been as effective as it could because leaders have not always acted with enough urgency to address the issues uncovered.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The vast majority who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire 'Parent View' agreed that their child was happy, safe and that they would recommend Eastfield to another parent. One parent commented, 'It's a wonderful school where our son learns, plays and enjoys himself. All the staff are helpful and know our son well.'

Governance of the school

- The governing body have been unsuccessful in holding leaders to account for the recent poor progress and attainment of some pupils.
- Individual governors have undertaken some monitoring visits. However, they do not always have a sharp enough focus for these visits nor are their findings reported to other governors clearly enough.
- Due to a number of governor vacancies there are currently no link governors monitoring the work of leaders with responsibility for English or mathematics.
- Individual governors have undertaken training in, for example, safeguarding.
- Governors are fully aware of the current issues at the school and are determined to address them urgently.
- Governors have rightly commissioned an external review of governance to see how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all relevant checks are made on adults before they are allowed to volunteer or work at the school. These records are detailed, thorough and well kept.
- Designated safeguarding leads are well qualified and trained in areas such as preventing female genital mutilation and identifying signs of domestic abuse. All staff follow a 'five-year pathway' of safeguarding training. Local authority updates are shared frequently at staff meetings. Consequently, staff are up to date with the latest safeguarding policies and procedures.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. Adults are clear regarding the reporting procedures should they have a welfare concern about a pupil. The designated safeguarding leads keep well-organised records. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils and their families receive extra support from outside agencies, should they require it.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the pupils were well looked after and kept safe at Eastfield.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of teaching has been too variable and has failed to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, some pupils have made insufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they have moved through the school.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, can achieve. Pupils, including the most able pupils, are sometimes given work that does not challenge them sufficiently.

- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information accurately to plan activities that appropriately challenge pupils. For example, in some Year 1 maths books the most able pupils were sometimes given work that was too easy for them.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended pieces of writing across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are not embedding these skills deeply enough.
- There is an appropriate system in place for leaders and teachers to track the progress and attainment made by pupils. This information is analysed formally by senior leaders on a termly basis and more frequently on an informal basis by class teachers. This system clearly highlights which pupils are falling behind or achieving well and in which subject areas. However, this assessment information is not always used effectively by teachers to plan lessons that effectively challenge all pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used most effectively when they deepen pupils' learning by asking them challenging questions. Teaching assistants understand there are certain activities that pupils should complete without direct adult supervision, therefore promoting their independence. Consequently, these pupils develop confidence and can complete other activities on their own.
- Individual phonics sessions are taught well. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils were enthusiastically learning new letter sounds and blends. The teacher and teaching assistant were skilfully giving opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of words that contained these sounds. However, there is not a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching of phonics as pupils move through the school. Consequently, some pupils become confused and do not make the progress in reading of which they are capable.
- There are examples of stronger teaching at the school that should be shared among other staff. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils were fully engaged in using a thesaurus to expand their vocabulary by finding words with similar meaning in a poem. Pupils enjoyed the activity because it interested them and the level of challenge was appropriate.
- Teachers ensure that classrooms are bright and stimulating with displays that celebrate good pieces of work. Other displays have useful reminders to help support pupils' learning. These include key spellings, vocabulary and mathematical language used in the current topic.
- There have been opportunities for teachers to meet with colleagues from other schools in order to moderate the assessments made of pupils work. This ensures that the judgements made by teachers regarding pupils' achievements are accurate. The local authority has recently validated assessment judgements made by staff in the early years and at the end of Year 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- The vast majority of pupils are confident and self-assured. Pupils spoke maturely with inspectors about their learning and were happy to discuss different aspects of their work. During a discussion with a group of pupils, they showed respect for each other's ideas and views.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when, for example, crossing roads and using the internet. A successful workshop was held recently informing parents of the potential dangers of, for example, social media and age-restricted console games.
- The school's motto of 'caring, sharing and learning together' is evident throughout the school. Staff know pupils and their families very well. As a result, relationships between leaders, staff, pupils and parents are extremely positive. Pupils told inspectors there were a number of adults at school they could talk to if they were worried.
- Pupils enjoy being members of the school council. For example, the council has recently been responsible for organising a toy sale with the proceeds going towards purchasing new sports equipment for use at breaktime and lunchtime.
- There is a good selection of educational visits that promotes enjoyment and learning in the wider curriculum. Recent examples include trips to a wildlife park, local farms and the library. Pupils develop cooking and mathematical skills through frequent opportunities to bake.
- Parents value the early morning breakfast club. There are a good range of suitable and safe activities for pupils to complete, while they enjoy a healthy breakfast. Consequently, pupils are ready to start their day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in classrooms, corridors and when playing outside at breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils told inspectors that instances of poor behaviour and bullying are rare. Pupils are respectful of adults and each other.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. Pupils respond well to adults' instructions, therefore allowing lessons to run smoothly and without interruption.
- Pupils enjoy receiving awards in assemblies for good work, displaying good manners and for keeping shared areas and cloakrooms tidy. Pupils respond positively to the extra responsibility of being a 'special helper' for the day.
- Leaders have good strategies in place to improve pupils' rates of attendance. For example, parents and outside agencies are contacted swiftly should a pupils' attendance become a concern. Current absence and persistent absence rates are just above the national average; however, they are improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Inspection evidence and assessment information provided by the school shows not all current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, are consistently making good progress from their various starting points in

reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils are not catching up in order to meet the standards expected for their age.

- In 2016 and 2017, the proportions of pupils leaving key stage 1 who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics were below and sometimes well below the national averages. The proportions of pupils who achieved at a greater depth in these subjects were also below and sometimes well below the national averages.
- Over recent years, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been below the national averages. This is because there is not a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading running through the early years and Year 1.
- A higher proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, leaving key stage 1 in 2017 achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared to their 2016 counterparts. This was particularly the case in writing. In 2017, a higher proportion of the most able pupils achieved at a greater depth in these subjects than in 2016. Standards are therefore rising.
- Inspection evidence and assessment information provided by the school, suggests that a higher proportion of current pupils are on track to achieve the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case last year.
- There are a number of pupils currently in Year 2 who are making accelerated progress in, for example, mathematics and reading. Some, but not all, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are now making faster progress. This is because of the quality of the individualised support they receive.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with knowledge and skills that are often below and sometimes well below those expected for their age. While some children, including disadvantaged children, make accelerated progress and catch up, other children do not. Consequently, these children are not prepared well enough for life in Year 1.
- Some children do not make consistently good progress in reading and writing. This is because teachers and teaching assistants do not provide frequent enough opportunities for children to practise and develop these key skills. For example, during phonics sessions, children were saying letter sounds but were not given the opportunity to practise writing them down.
- Leaders have not ensured that parents contribute frequently to their child's ongoing assessment using the online tool. Consequently, staff cannot plan the next steps in children's learning as accurately as they could if this was the case.
- The proportions of children achieving a good level of development has declined over recent years, and in 2017 was well below the national average. However, assessment information and work seen in children's books suggests that current children are making faster progress. This is particularly the case in mathematics. This is because the leader is now accurately identifying areas of children's underperformance and providing opportunities for children to develop skills in these areas.

- The atmosphere in the early years is busy and purposeful. Children behave very well and are engaged in activities that stimulate and interest them. For example, through the topic of 'Chinese New Year' children were observed making dragons and copying Chinese writing. One group were developing mathematical language by using 'noodles' to decide if objects were longer or shorter than each other.
- Relationships between children and adults are extremely positive. Children are very well cared for in a safe environment. Staff have received all relevant safeguarding training including paediatric first aid.
- Transition arrangements for children starting in the early years are strong. During the summer term children and parents visit the school in order to familiarise themselves with the adults, classrooms and routines. The early years leader visits children who are attending other nurseries. Consequently, staff have a good knowledge of each child before they start at the school.
- There are good links with the community. For example, a local dental nurse has helped to deliver a local authority project encouraging the children to brush their teeth. There have also been visits to the local supermarket, farm and theatre.
- Parents are equally as positive regarding the provision in the early years as they are in the rest of the school. One parent commented: 'My son is learning brilliantly in Reception and has come on so much!'

School details

Unique reference number	120458
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10041591

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Sizer
Headteacher	Sarah Akhurst
Telephone number	01507 603 376
Website	www.eastfield.lincs.sch.uk/
Email address	office@eastfield.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized infant school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not believed to be English is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is just above the national average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher was the executive headteacher at Eastfield and the neighbouring junior school. This arrangement ceased in November 2017 when the headteacher returned solely to Eastfield.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in all classes and examined pupils' work from a wide range of books. A number of these inspection activities were undertaken jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes as well as in lessons. They met with a group of pupils and listened to them read.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, attendance, school development planning and the school's current pupil assessment information.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, two governors including the chair, a representative from the local authority, leaders responsible for English, mathematics, SEN and/or disabilities and the extra funding the school receives for pupil premium and the PE and sport grant.
- Inspectors took into consideration 55 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 54 free-text comments from parents. Inspectors met parents at the start of the school day. There were no responses to the staff or pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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