

Colkirk Church of England Primary Academy

School Road, Colkirk, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 7NW

Inspection dates

30–31 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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

- The executive headteacher has high expectations and is committed to the school's continued improvement. He provides strong and clear leadership for staff and pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are very proud of their school and have excellent relationships with their teachers. Pupils demonstrate consistently high levels of care and consideration for each other.
- Leaders' provision for pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent. Leaders develop very close links with families and ensure that pupils access high-quality support, guidance and enrichment opportunities.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are very well looked after and that they are kept safe. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- In 2018, pupils' progress at key stage 2 in writing and mathematics was in line with national averages. Progress in reading was well above the national average.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan and deliver learning that motivates, challenges and interests pupils. Teachers are well supported by the team of teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school.
- Parents hold the school in very high regard. Staff are proud to work at the school and are grateful for the training and development opportunities that are open to them.
- Since joining the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies trust (DNEAT) the school has made substantial improvements. Trust leaders are effective. They provide high-quality support and challenge.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Their additional funding is used effectively to ensure that they make strong progress.
- Leaders and trustees ensure that the school's curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of teaching and learning experiences. However, the level of challenge and expectation in science and the foundation subjects is not as high as it is in English and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start to their education in early years. However, the most able children do not make as much progress as their classmates.
- Pupils who join the school with average prior attainment make less progress than their peers in key stages 1 and 2. Too few go on to attain at the higher standard.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment in science and the foundation subjects by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan learning activities that consistently provide pupils with higher levels of challenge
 - developing more effective strategies to monitor the impact of the wider curriculum on pupils' learning.
- Continue to improve pupils' progress by:
 - increasing the extent of challenge across key stages 1 and 2 for pupils who join the school with average prior attainment
 - ensuring that the most able children in early years are supported to attain at higher levels.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher has established a culture of high expectation for staff and pupils. He is proud of the school's strengths and knows what leaders and staff do well. His strong leadership since the predecessor school's last inspection has resulted in wide-ranging changes that have raised standards across the school. However, he also has a clear understanding of the school's weaknesses and has developed effective plans to bring about further improvements. Consequently, pupils receive a good, and improving, standard of education.
- Parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are totally supportive of the school. Parents' views reflect both the strong relationships that school staff develop with families and the high levels of care that they provide for pupils' development and well-being. One parent, reflecting the views of many, wrote: 'I could not have asked for more from my children's school and would travel miles to receive the same level of service in the future. We have been so lucky to have such a school as our catchment school.' Another stated: 'This school has given my children the best start any parent could wish for.'
- Leaders know pupils very well. Teachers assess pupils' work very accurately and track their progress carefully to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Pupils who fall behind are identified in regular pupil-progress meetings and leaders provide them with additional help to catch up. As a result, pupils make good and improving progress across the school from their different starting points. Although overall progress is good, pupils who join the school with average prior attainment do not make progress that is as strong as that of their classmates.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their priorities for improvement are appropriate, their plans are well focused and they contain precise, measurable targets. Improvement plans include demanding targets and they are effective in balancing the specific needs of the school alongside trust-wide priorities.
- Leaders are also accurate in their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, learning and assessment. Staff value the training that they receive, particularly the professional development available through the trust. As a consequence, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.
- The school's curriculum is a strength; leaders are committed to ensuring that the study of English and mathematics is supplemented by a wide range of subjects that allow pupils to develop new knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum is enriched by national and international residential visits, trips to art galleries and a range of focused days, such as the popular 'evacuee day'. Although pupils enjoy the wide-ranging curriculum, teaching in science and the foundation subjects does not consistently provide them with the same level of challenge that they receive in English and mathematics. Leaders' monitoring of the impact wider curriculum on pupils' learning is also less established than in English and mathematics.

- Pupils' experience at school is enhanced by the range of extra-curricular activities that leaders provide. There are many sporting clubs and enrichment activities on offer and they are popular with pupils.
- Leaders are very effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are taught to understand and celebrate differences and they undertake regular visits to places of cultural or spiritual importance. Pupils talk passionately about the importance of looking after each other and welcoming new members to the school community. They actively participate in a range of charity activities. For example, they speak proudly of their work with a local food bank and their links with a nearby care home. Fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law, are embedded within the school culture.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the barriers to learning that are faced by disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Teachers are held to account effectively for the progress of these pupils. They understand pupils' needs, track their progress closely and provide additional support when needed. Leaders use the additional funding they receive to provide pupils with access to a wide range of support and to enable them to participate in additional educational activities. As a result of leaders' actions, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make strong progress.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Pupils are provided with high-quality instruction from a specialist sports coach who provides sessions in sports such as table tennis, netball and gymnastics. Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy. They enjoy their PE lessons, the extra-curricular sporting clubs on offer and the opportunities that they have to represent the school in sporting competitions.

Governance of the school

- The support and challenge that trustees and governors offer the school are effective. The trust board and the local governing body have clearly defined areas of responsibility that are well communicated to school leaders; both bodies play an important role in supporting school improvement. Leaders value the strategic contributions made by trust leaders, trustees and governors.
- Trustees and governors are well trained in relation to their specific roles. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses through their attendance at trust board and local governing body meetings. In addition, governors attend a range of sub-committees and visit the school routinely. As a result, they provide leaders with high-quality challenge and support.
- Trustees and governors ensure that their statutory duties, especially in safeguarding pupils' welfare, are fully met. The link safeguarding governor checks safeguarding arrangements, including the record of pre-employment checks, routinely. The trust also undertakes routine safeguarding audits. Trustees and governors receive valuable training that helps them to understand their responsibilities regarding keeping pupils safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff at all levels receive regular safeguarding training and they know how to identify pupils who are potentially at risk. Staff understand, and follow, leaders' clear procedures for the reporting of any safeguarding concerns.
- School leaders ensure that safeguarding concerns are logged effectively. Leaders are tenacious in making sure that child-protection referrals are dealt with appropriately. The maintenance of child-protection files is effective and leaders work well with representatives from other agencies to ensure that pupils quickly get the support they need.
- All required checks are carried out when recruiting new staff to work with pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- As a result of leaders' actions, the quality of teaching across early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 is good and continues to improve. Every parent who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agreed that pupils are taught well; pupils who met with the inspector said that they enjoy their lessons and that they make good progress.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong. Teachers consistently establish clear routines and have high expectations of pupils. Pupils respect their teachers and have very positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils are keen to get involved in activities and they are not afraid to take risks and make mistakes.
- Pupils undertake individual, paired and group tasks with enthusiasm. They enjoy discussing their ideas in small groups and sharing them more widely with the class. When they do this, they receive helpful feedback from their teacher. Consequently, their ideas are challenged and their understanding is deepened.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They question individual pupils, and groups of pupils, skilfully to gain an understanding of what pupils know. They use this information to provide pupils with specific and appropriate guidance about what they need to do to improve their work further.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils with SEND. They plan closely with teachers and they understand the needs of the pupils that they are supporting. Their effective questioning and explanation of tasks support pupils with SEND to make strong progress.
- Teachers plan activities that take pupils' different starting points into account. However, pupils sometimes spend too long completing easier activities and they do not move onto more challenging tasks quickly enough. This is particularly true of pupils who join the school with average prior attainment. As a result, the progress of these pupils slows.
- Teaching in science and the foundation subjects allows pupils to develop a wide range of new knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils enjoy the activities that their teachers devise for them. However, teachers' expectations of the depth of pupils' work are not as high in these subjects as they are in English and mathematics. As a consequence, pupils' progress is not as strong.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very well looked after. Staff know pupils well and consistently follow the school's procedures to keep them safe. Staff develop very strong relationships with parents and they work very effectively to support pupils and their families. One parent stated: 'The staff go "above and beyond" when it comes to support for both child and parent welfare.' Another wrote: 'We are so lucky to have such a welcoming, nurturing and supportive school at such close proximity.'
- Pupils know that there are certain nominated staff who they can talk to if they have a concern. However, they are confident in talking to all staff. One pupil said: 'At this school, teachers will never let you down.' All pupils who spoke with the inspector, and all parents who responded to Parent View, agreed that pupils are safe, happy and well looked after.
- Pupils' personal development is a real strength of the school. Pupils are taught to be independent, reflective and responsible learners and citizens. They are given many opportunities to develop their confidence, social skills and cultural understanding. As a consequence, pupils understand their responsibilities both in school and as members of society. Pupils are able to look after their own, and each other's, mental health because of the school's 'all about me' programme.
- Pupils' personal development is enhanced significantly by the strong relationships that they develop with other pupils of all ages. Younger pupils quickly develop confidence and copy the positive behaviour and attitudes of their older schoolmates. Older pupils routinely ensure that younger pupils are happy and safe. One parent, reflecting the views of many, stated: 'There is a huge emphasis placed on looking after each other and this creates a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for pupils to learn in.' An older pupil simply said, 'We look after the little ones.'
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that there is very little bullying; when it does happen, pupils say that it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons is exemplary. Pupils are friendly, polite and well mannered. They follow the instructions of their teachers closely and they have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils behave very well at lunch and breaktimes, where they are well supervised. Pupils enjoy socialising or playing sensibly in the well-resourced outside areas.

- Leaders and staff have shared, high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, excellent behaviour is the norm. Pupils say that they come to school to learn. Incidents of poor behaviour and the use of fixed-period exclusions are both rare.
- All parents who responded to Parent View agreed that pupils are well behaved. Staff also agreed that behaviour was excellent, as did pupils.
- Pupils enjoy attending school and very few are persistently absent. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by poor attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils typically make strong progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard was above the national average. Attainment at greater depth was broadly average.
- Attainment in the phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils was also above the national average in 2018.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 2, pupils' combined attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected and higher standard was in line with national averages. Pupils' overall progress at the end of key stage 2 was also broadly in line with national averages in both mathematics and writing. Progress in reading was well above average.
- Pupils across the school continue to make good overall progress. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are making particularly strong progress in reading, while pupils in Years 2 and 3 are making similarly strong progress in writing and mathematics. Year 4 pupils' progress in reading is currently lower than in other year groups, but it is improving rapidly.
- Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged make good progress from their starting points. Their different needs are quickly identified by staff and they are supported effectively in their learning. Pupils who join the school with average prior attainment make less progress than their peers because they are not always challenged sufficiently in lessons to work at the higher standard.
- The strong overall progress that pupils make across reading, writing and mathematics is not always replicated in science and the foundation subjects. This is because teaching in science and the foundation subjects does not consistently provide pupils with the same level of challenge that they receive in English and mathematics.
- Leaders organise a variety of transition activities so that that pupils are well prepared, both academically and personally, for their transition to secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the early years with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of effective early assessment, leaders ensure that children's individual needs are identified quickly and that learning activities support

their progress. Consequently, children make good overall progress across early years and are prepared for Year 1 effectively.

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year was broadly in line with the national average in 2018. Leaders' assessments, evidence in children's workbooks and observations of teaching all demonstrate that children this year are currently making good overall progress.
- The new early years leader has a clear vision for its future development. She is well supported by the executive headteacher and the head of school. Leaders' work to support children as they join the provision is effective. They work closely with families and pre-school providers to ensure that children make a smooth start at Colkirk. Parents appreciate the effective transition arrangements.
- Links with parents remain strong as children progress through early years. Parents are grateful for the very regular informal opportunities to meet and discuss any concerns with the early years team.
- The early years curriculum provides children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their academic, social and emotional skills. Children's learning opportunities are enhanced by an attractive learning environment, where they benefit from individual, small-group and whole-class support.
- Adults ensure that children behave well and that they are safe. Children collaborate well, they listen closely and they support each other. The environment is safe and adults are well trained to care for and protect the children. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- Teaching in early years is effective. Children benefit from a range of well-planned activities that interest them and allow them to develop their skills across the different areas of learning. However, there are times when questioning does not sufficiently challenge the small number of most-able children.
- The early years team regularly observe children to assess how quickly they are developing and to see if they need extra help. Although this ensures that children make good overall progress, there are times when learning could be further enhanced by increasing the level of challenge for children in some of the activities.

School details

Unique reference number	141895
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10083939

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	William Crawshay
Executive Headteacher	Christopher Allen
Telephone number	01328 862684
Website	www.colkirk.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	head@colkirk.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the school's first section 5 inspection since it joined the DNEAT in December 2015.
- The school receives support and challenge from the trust's chief executive officer, its academies executive regional principal (AERP) and its local governing body. Responsibility for the school's performance lies with the DNEAT trust board.
- The school is a part of the Diocese of Norwich. In its most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (April 2016), it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and of those who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who receive SEND support or who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, subject leaders, the early years leader, governors, the trust's AERP and its CEO.
- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The inspector observed learning in 12 lessons, all jointly with leaders.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were looked at by the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school.
- The inspector met with two groups of pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life.
- The inspector heard pupils read and discuss their reading habits.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including assessment information and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The inspector also scrutinised leaders' improvement plans and their behaviour, safeguarding and attendance records.
- The inspector considered the 23 responses and 18 free-text comments made by parents to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire and spoke to some parents before school.

Inspection team

Daniel Gee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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