

Friday Bridge Community Primary School

Maltmas Drove, Friday Bridge, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 0HW

Inspection dates

3–4 July 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have not effectively addressed deficiencies in the quality of teaching across subjects and year groups. Consequently, over time, standards have declined, and pupils have not achieved well, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Until very recently, governors have not had an accurate view of the school's performance. Over time, this has limited their ability to check on the impact of leaders' work to improve the school.
- The use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and physical education (PE) and sport has not been rigorously scrutinised by governors to ensure that it is being spent effectively to secure better outcomes.
- The leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is underdeveloped. Newly appointed subject leaders are not yet monitoring the effectiveness of teaching or assessing pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching across the school is not consistently good. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can, and should, achieve.
- Leaders have not previously ensured that teaching is securing consistently strong progress for all pupils. Therefore, too few pupils reach the expected and higher standards of attainment.
- Teachers do not routinely provide most-able pupils with activities that challenge and stretch their learning. This slows their progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher's strong leadership and actively ambitious vision for the future are securing swift improvements in teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6. She leads the school well and is ably supported by the new assistant headteacher.
- The teaching of phonics is now good, and the Year 1 phonics outcomes are quickly improving.
- Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the early years.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance by ensuring that:
 - the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is monitored and evaluated, so that spending is precisely targeted to ensure that these pupils make consistent and more accelerated progress across all subjects
 - the additional funding for PE and sport is spent effectively to secure better outcomes for pupils in PE
 - the skills and confidence of the newly appointed non-core subject leaders are quickly developed, so that they can improve the quality of teaching, assess pupils' progress, identify any underachievement and consequently raise standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve across a full range of subjects
 - consistently use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to plan lessons that meet pupils' learning needs, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - routinely set work which challenges and stretches the most able pupils to achieve as well as they can.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There has been a decline in standards at Friday Bridge Community Primary School since the last inspection. The previously good quality of education has not been maintained.
- School leaders, including governors, have had an overly optimistic view of how well the school is doing despite receiving warning notices from the local authority in 2016 and 2017. Consequently, leaders and governors have not recognised what is necessary to improve the school's performance. Until recently, actions to address weak teaching and poor outcomes for pupils have lacked sufficient rigour and urgency. Teaching is not getting better quickly enough to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they should in all year groups.
- The school's performance is now more positive. Current leaders and governors now have an accurate and realistic view of how well the school is doing. They are clear about what they need to do to secure further improvements in the school's work and have suitable plans in place to sustain the pace of development. They have introduced many appropriate changes, but these have not had time to make a positive impact on teaching and subsequently, outcomes across the school.
- The leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet fully in place. Leaders are providing the challenge and support that are necessary for new subject leaders to make significant and sustained improvements to teaching and pupils' outcomes in their areas, but this is at an early stage of development.
- Leaders use the extra government funding they receive for disadvantaged pupils, and for those who have SEN and/or disabilities, to provide additional academic and well-being support for these pupils. However, until recently, there has been limited understanding of the impact of the specific activities which are put in place. Over time, governors have not kept a careful enough check on this spending to ensure that it has maximum benefit for these two groups of pupils. Therefore, not enough pupils supported through this funding make the progress that they should in all year groups. Following a recent external review of the use of the pupil premium funding at the school, governors are now challenging leaders and holding them more rigorously to account for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils at the school.
- Leaders have used the primary PE and sports funding to provide increased opportunity for pupils in a wide range of sports. Pupils speak highly of, and enjoy, the inter-school sports competitions and after-school clubs they take part in. The use of a sports coach to provide specialist support has raised the profile of sport and promotes healthy lifestyles. However, the evaluation of the spending is not rigorous. There is no clear line of accountability for this funding to check that provision is sustainable or improving the quality of teaching in this subject.
- After joining the school in September 2017, the headteacher promptly established and acted on her clear, ambitious vision for the school. Aply supported by the assistant headteacher, her positive and determined leadership is successfully bringing about many improvements, particularly in teaching and the progress of current pupils.

- The pace of development in the school has accelerated in the past academic year. Leaders with responsibility for improving teaching in English and mathematics have had a clear impact on increasing the progress that pupils make. The quality of English and mathematics teaching has improved, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6, and most pupils are making better progress than previously.
- The headteacher has greatly improved the range of training opportunities for staff. She has ensured that teachers and teaching assistants undertake training that is based on their strengths and the needs of the school. Leaders also work more closely with colleagues from other local schools to share best practice.
- The curriculum is organised and arranged to ensure that a breadth of subjects beyond English and mathematics is taught. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and trips. For example, during weekly 'Fantastic Fridays', pupils from different year groups work together on creative activities around themes such as 'amazing artists' and 'around the world'. This enhances pupils' learning and widens their experiences across different subjects. Additionally, these experiences promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well.
- Leaders have worked hard to gain the trust and support of families and the local community. Relationships are strong and the work of the school to bring the school community together is valued.
- The number of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, was low, but there were more responses to the school's own recent parent questionnaire. These responses and the comments of the parents who spoke to the inspector were very positive. Many parents recognise the improvements made since the current headteacher joined the school. Parents said that Friday Bridge Community Primary School is a 'very friendly place'. They appreciate the hard work of staff, who are 'professional and approachable'. One parent, summing up the views of many, said: 'The school as a whole has become a much brighter, positive place to be, with exciting opportunities for the children.'
- In the past year, the school has worked more closely with the local authority. Leaders have benefited from effective training, support and challenge from the local authority aimed at raising standards quickly and improving pupils' outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Governors acknowledge that, in the past, they did not challenge leaders stringently enough about their work to improve pupils' academic outcomes, or were unable to do so due to limited information. This situation has now changed. The governing body is re-energised and determined to carry out its responsibilities well.
- The governing body is gaining a better understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors monitor the work of the school more thoroughly by visiting the classrooms, analysing assessment information and looking at pupils' books. They rightly use the information they have gathered to challenge leaders about the school's performance.
- Governors have a better understanding of the urgent need to improve outcomes for pupils and are determined to do all they can to quickly move the school forward.

- The nominated governor for safeguarding makes sure that the governing body fully understands its safeguarding responsibilities, and these are carried out well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that the checks made on staff, governors and visitors are thorough. The designated leaders for safeguarding ensure that all members of staff are up to date with the latest guidance on keeping pupils safe and well looked after.
- Staff are clear on the procedures for reporting any concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. Records are very detailed, well ordered and clearly identify any actions taken. Leaders use these records to support pupils and families effectively.
- The school works well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The designated leaders for safeguarding are tenacious in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. When needed, they challenge external agencies so that pupils receive the support they need and in a timely manner.
- Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe in school. Pupils clearly explained how they make sure that they keep themselves safe when they are crossing a road or when they are using the internet. They know they can talk to the adults in school should they have a worry or a concern.
- The overwhelming majority of parents recognise and appreciate that the school places a high priority on maintaining pupils' safety and care.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not strong enough to ensure that all identified groups of pupils across the school learn equally well, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Differences in the quality of teaching between classes mean that some pupils make better progress than others.
- In some classes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching does not routinely challenge pupils and learning is not well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers do not question pupils effectively to help them deepen their understanding. The most able pupils are not consistently well supported to achieve the higher standards that they are capable of. Some most-able pupils told the inspector that they would like to have more challenging work.
- The school's recent focus on developing the teaching of reading is improving teachers' subject knowledge. Where reading is taught most effectively, teachers and teaching assistants skilfully introduce and model new vocabulary and question pupils, encouraging them to retrieve information and gain meaning from text. Teachers make sure that pupils have access to a range of high-quality books and read regularly in school.
- Developments in the teaching of writing have secured marked improvements in pupils' written work. Work in books demonstrates that pupils have regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. The recent focus to develop pupils'

vocabulary and involve parents in supporting their children's writing at home is helping to improve pupils' writing skills more successfully.

- Teachers have strengthened pupils' understanding of mathematics during the past year. Where learning is strongest, teachers give pupils regular opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills to tackle mathematics tasks successfully.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well across the school. They use skilful questioning and adeptly support pupils to make progress in their learning.
- Phonics is taught well, and pupils make strong progress. Highly structured sessions led by teachers and teaching assistants provide pupils with a range of linked activities to develop their understanding of sounds. Pupils enjoy reading, and confidently use their phonics skills to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Teaching is improving, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6. This is because gaps in pupils' learning are quickly identified and effective support put in place to enable pupils to catch up quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud to be part of Friday Bridge Community Primary School. They told the inspector, 'We are kind to each other and we accept each other's opinions.'
- Pupils live up to the school's vision of 'aspire, believe, succeed, excel' through their commitment to learning. They told the inspector that this approach will enable them to become successful and responsible adults in the future. Pupils commented that they 'help you to believe in yourself. You need to set goals and try to achieve them.'
- Pupils know and understand the school's values of respect, independence, humility, faith, perseverance and courage. Pupils recognise that living out the school's values is important because they 'make Friday Bridge a brilliant school.'
- Pupils told the inspector that there is no bullying in the school. If bullying were to happen, then pupils are confident the adults would sort it out quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and courteous and show consideration for one another as they move around the school. At breaktimes, pupils make good use of the games and equipment the school provides. They play with joy and enthusiasm because there is 'lots to do'. Disagreements are rare and, when they do occur, pupils know that adults are available to help. Pupils behave well in the dining hall. They enjoy chatting with friends while they eat their lunch. They speak to adults politely and follow their requests promptly.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to school and their considerate behaviour make a valuable contribution to the school's calm, purposeful atmosphere. In most lessons, pupils listen

well to their teachers and settle quickly to work. They behave well, even at those times when their work is not sufficiently challenging or engaging, and so lessons are seldom disrupted by off-task behaviour.

- Leaders have worked hard to promote the importance of good attendance with pupils and their families, including those who are disadvantaged, and those from the Gypsy, Roma community. Staff closely monitor why pupils are absent and follow up concerns with parents quickly. Leaders work closely with other external agencies, such as the family worker and education welfare officer, to ensure that any attendance concerns are addressed. As a result, attendance rates are improving and are now close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is also reducing and is moving nearer to national figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' learning and progress vary across the school according to the quality of teaching in each class and year group.
- Historical weaknesses in teaching mean that some pupils lack the key knowledge and skills in English and mathematics needed to achieve well. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was below the national average in both 2016 and 2017.
- Disadvantaged pupils move forward in their learning at broadly similar rates to the other pupils at the school. While the progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved during the past few months, they still do not make as much progress as other pupils nationally. Their performance is not yet sufficiently strong to ensure that a high proportion leave the school attaining the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not consistently achieve as well as they should in all classes. However, recent improvements in teaching are ensuring that they are making better progress than previously.
- In recent years, too few of the most able pupils have achieved the higher standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. While developments in teaching during the past year mean that the most able pupils learn increasingly well, their progress remains uneven across the school.
- The progress made by the significant number of pupils who are Gypsy, Roma is improving. Work in books and observations in lessons indicate that these pupils are now making stronger progress.
- Improvements in teaching are now making up for lost time and pupils' progress is more positive. The quality of pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics has improved substantially in the past few months, as teachers' expectations rise and developments in teaching take effect. Increasing numbers of pupils currently in the school are working at expected standards in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the national phonics check at the end of Year 1 is increasing. The school's assessment information demonstrates that pupils are making better progress in developing and using their understanding of phonics throughout the school. This is because phonics is taught systematically, and

pupils use their phonics skills accurately when they read books.

- Pupils in Year 6 have made strong progress since September 2017. As a result, they are better prepared for the next stage of their learning than previously.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the early years with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age, particularly in the areas of communication, literacy and mathematics. The majority of children make good progress and so are well prepared for their transition into Year 1.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. The early years leader, who is also the assistant headteacher, has an accurate picture of the strengths and priorities for development.
- Adults have high expectations and ensure that children are presented with a wide range of activities which excite them and inspire them to learn. Many children display good levels of independence and are able to cooperate, share ideas and persevere in their learning. Whether making objects float in the water tray, building a train track 'to go to the beach', or proudly counting the pieces of a completed jigsaw, children make good use of the skills they have learned.
- The work in children's books also demonstrates that most children make good progress across different areas of learning. For example, after a walk in the local area one child noted, 'Birds eat juicy caterpillars and seeds.' Another child looking closely at a ladybird stated, 'It's got six spots. I'm going to put it on this leaf so it can eat it.'
- Children are expected to learn their letters and sounds and to practise their phonics in reading and writing. Work in their writing books demonstrates that most children do this well.
- Staff know the children well and support them effectively to be ready and willing to learn. Rules and routines are established so children settle promptly and respond well to their teachers' expectations of behaviour.
- Adults ensure that children are safe and that safeguarding arrangements are secure. The children know how to stay safe in the environment and take reasonable steps to manage their own well-being and health. For example, children were observed independently putting on their sunhats to go outside. One child commented, 'I need my hat. It's hot outside.'
- The school has developed positive relationships with parents. Transition arrangements from the onsite pre-school into Reception are effective and include a home visit from the early years staff. This helps children to make a positive start in the Reception class.
- Parents are kept well informed with regard to the progress their children make. Workshops are organised for parents, covering a range of areas such as phonics and mathematics. Events such as attending a pirate day, or a teddy bears' picnic, give parents opportunities to see their children learning and share ideas of how to support their children's achievement at home.

School details

Unique reference number	110633
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10041781

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Leonard Veenendaal
Headteacher	Sophie Foston
Telephone number	01945 860220
Website	www.fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk
Email address	office@fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils of Gypsy, Roma heritage is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from other minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the government's pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and of those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan are above the national averages.
- In both 2016 and 2017, the local authority issued a warning notice to school leaders due to significant concerns regarding standards of performance and pupils' progress

being unacceptably low.

- In 2017, the school did not meet the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- The current headteacher, assistant headteacher and the chair of the governing body were all appointed in September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in every class. The observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- A wide range of pupils' workbooks were examined by the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, who is also the early years leader, the inclusion coordinator, the office manager and the administrative assistant. Meetings were also held with several governors and the local authority adviser.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally in class, and around the school at break and lunchtimes, to seek their views about the school. A meeting was also held with a group of pupils more formally to discuss their learning and many aspects of school life.
- Some pupils were heard reading their books. The inspector also talked to pupils about their reading habits and looked at their reading records.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including: assessment information; minutes from the governing body meetings; reports produced by the local authority; the school's own evaluation; improvement plans; and records about behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The inspector considered the 17 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 17 responses to the Ofsted free-text system. The inspector also took account of the school's own recent survey which included the views of 81 parents. Additionally, the inspector spoke to some parents before school and took account of the seven responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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