

Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Primary School

Occupation Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1EE

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

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

- The headteacher, through her strong leadership, has created a team who are committed to her vision.
- The trust has supported school leaders well. It has provided staff training opportunities and guidance on improving teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes.
- Members of the local governing body are experienced and committed to the school. They understand their roles and responsibilities well.
- Middle leaders are increasingly taking responsibility for school improvements. Newly qualified teachers speak very highly of the help and advice they receive from colleagues.
- Leaders' actions are raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and relationships are positive. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Learning support assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their school life because of good teaching and leadership. From low starting points, they make good progress.
- Leaders and governors make sure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils say that they feel safe.
- Pupils behave well. Instances of bullying are rare. The proportion of pupils who are excluded for poor behaviour has reduced.
- School leaders do not thoroughly check the impact of the pupil premium funding on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.
- The most able pupils do not consistently achieve the higher standard in writing.
- Teachers do not always provide consistently challenging activities in mathematics to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Teachers do not always explain pupils' next steps in their learning clearly. This slows pupils' progress.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, however, is still too low.
- Outdoor experiences in the early years do not offer enough structured activities for children to engage with. These missed opportunities slow children's progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management to improve pupils' learning by:
 - making sure that leaders evaluate the impact of how the pupil premium funding is used to accelerate progress of disadvantaged pupils and acting on the findings.
- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of the most able pupils so that more achieve the higher standards in writing
 - teachers provide more opportunities for all pupils to do mathematical problems in greater depth so that more pupils reach a higher standard at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in mathematics
 - teachers apply the school's assessment and feedback policy consistently, so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - continuing to reduce the proportion of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, who are regularly absent from school.
- Improve the quality of early years provision by:
 - ensuring that the outdoor activities include more structured tasks so that pupils make faster progress in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is at the heart of the school. According to one pupil, 'The best thing about the school is the headteacher.' As the school has grown rapidly, her strong leadership has created a team committed to her vision for the school and its pupils. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher lead the school well and the school is continuing to improve.
- Leaders know the school well and are able to identify its strengths and areas for improvement. For example, they recognise that pupils could achieve more highly and that new school leaders need support in their roles. Some targets on the school improvement plan lack the necessary precision for governors and the trust to be able to hold school leaders to account.
- The trust offers good support to leaders and governors. The school improvement director frequently visits the school to check leaders' judgements about, for example, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The trust has provided opportunities for teachers to work with other schools from within the trust. The trust has also provided the school with staff and governor training. The work of the trust has been successful at improving the quality of teaching in the school.
- Leaders closely track the progress of different groups of pupils through the school year in reading, writing and mathematics. This has had a positive impact on raising pupils' outcomes. Teachers use this information to ensure that they plan pupils' next steps in learning. However, improvements in outcomes have not been consistent for all groups of pupils and for all subjects because interventions are not always focused sharply enough.
- Leaders are increasingly sharing responsibilities with subject coordinators and teaching champions. These middle leaders are very positive about taking on these roles and are keen to develop their skills and expertise. One of them commented, 'Everyone at the school is valued and respected as a professional.' These middle leaders make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The school is well placed to continue to improve.
- Staff morale is high. They speak very positively about the support they receive from school leaders and how much they enjoy working at the school. Staff who responded to their survey are all proud to work at the school and say that it is well led and managed.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is rich and varied. Pupils value the range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities that support their progress, for example choir, reading club, drama and basketball. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school's work. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy and mutual respect. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Newly qualified teachers feel very positive about the support they are receiving from leaders and the impact that this support has had on their practice.
- Leaders have improved pupils' attendance. However, some groups of pupils, for

example disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, do not attend as well as other pupils. Pupils' behaviour has also recently improved. However, leaders do not analyse information about pupils' behaviour and attendance meticulously enough. They are not able to ensure that their actions are improving the attendance and behaviour of these groups of pupils and improving their outcomes.

- Leaders have used the pupil premium funding mainly to provide disadvantaged pupils with more emotional, social and behavioural support through the school's inclusion team. However, leaders do not sharply analyse the effectiveness of their actions. They do not ensure that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils improves more rapidly towards the standards attained by their peers.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school. They say that their children are happy, make good progress and are well looked after. The very large majority say that they would recommend the school to others.

Governance of the school

- Governors and trustees know the school's strengths and areas needing improvement very well. They monitor the progress of actions on the school improvement plan closely.
- The local governing board is well established and members have a broad range of skills and expertise. Governors understand their roles well and provide visible support for the school's leaders. They are ambitious for the school and have high expectations of the pupils. Governors have a detailed understanding of pupils' outcomes. They support and challenge school leaders to continue to raise standards.
- Trustees work in close partnership with the headteacher. They provide a well-planned monitoring programme as well as evaluating the impact of their support. The trust also provides many professional development opportunities for staff which have, for example, helped to make middle leaders more effective in their roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. The school's team of safeguarding leaders works closely with all staff to ensure that everyone is alert to any signs that may suggest possible neglect or abuse.
- Leaders respond promptly to concerns. They ensure that there is early support in place, both from within school and from external agencies, for vulnerable pupils if they and their families need help.
- Staff have received appropriate safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. They are knowledgeable about the risks to pupils posed by radicalisation and extremism. Staff receive regular training updates.
- Leaders follow clear procedures for transferring and receiving pupils' safeguarding records when they arrive at or leave the school.
- Leaders ensure that the single central register is accurate and up to date. Recruitment checks on the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children are thorough.

- Parents, staff and pupils agree that the school is a safe place for pupils to be.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically good due to effective collaboration and support. Teachers use their enthusiasm and detailed subject knowledge to engage the pupils. For example, a key stage 2 science lesson saw pupils using their creative skills to construct the human digestive system out of different materials. Pupils were motivated and made rapid progress.
- Supportive relationships between pupils and adults mean that there is a positive climate for learning in the classrooms. Teachers' expectations of the pupils are generally high. For example, a teacher encouraged Year 6 pupils to use a wide range of literary techniques to improve their descriptive writing. Pupils were keen to share examples with the rest of the class. Similarly, Year 2 pupils chose how to present their work on the life cycle of a plant, taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work well together to promote good learning and behaviour in all year groups. Learning support assistants are knowledgeable about the subject and about the pupils' needs. If they spot pupils who are struggling or losing concentration, they provide timely intervention to bring them back on track. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to their survey think that their children are taught well.
- Teachers use questions to reinforce pupils' learning and to explain misconceptions. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson observed by an inspector, the teacher encouraged pupils to take risks because 'mistakes are our friends'. Pupils worked in pairs to explain their errors and clarify their understanding. When questioning was less skilful, teachers missed opportunities to engage all pupils and deepen their learning.
- Pupils receive good-quality phonics teaching which meets their different needs. Adults extend pupils' language at every opportunity and pupils are able to use more challenging words. This provides pupils with a secure base on which to build their wider reading skills. Pupils who read to an inspector were able to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words.
- Where teachers use the school's assessment and feedback policy well, pupils respond to the 'next steps' advice and know what they need to do to improve. However, teachers do not consistently give feedback to pupils and it is not always of a high enough quality. Pupils do not always act upon the advice given. As a result, pupils' progress slows.
- Teachers use different strategies to help pupils to develop their writing skills. For example, teachers model examples and provide pupils with guidance to improve the vocabulary and sentence structure in their written pieces. Teachers are not challenging most-able pupils enough to achieve the higher standards in their writing.
- In mathematics lessons, teachers do not always intervene quickly enough to move pupils' learning on. Evidence in pupils' workbooks shows that there are not enough opportunities for all pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. As a result, pupils do not always reach the higher standards of which they are capable.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Around the school and during lesson times the atmosphere is calm and purposeful. School staff have created a positive environment where pupils feel safe and are able to enjoy learning.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. For example, they hold doors open for visitors. They have positive attitudes to learning and want to contribute to the lessons. Pupils are supportive of each other, sharing in each other's successes.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are extremely positive. The majority of pupils listen to and readily follow instructions, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Pupils only lose focus when they are unsure or when tasks do not match their abilities or needs.
- The school's strong sense of community was evident when inspectors observed two assemblies. Key stage 2 pupils considered the idea that 'words have power' by sharing examples of their writing. Meanwhile, key stage 1 pupils considered how they could deal with 'a big bag of worries'. In each case, the pupils were respectful and showed their ability to empathise with others.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors and parents who responded to their survey agree that pupils are safe in school. Pupils know how to stay safe, including when using the road, and they value the sessions they have about 'stranger danger'. Pupils can talk confidently about how they can stay safe online. They know who they can talk to in school if they have any concerns. Parents have valued being able to attend workshops about online safety.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare but, if it does happen, the teachers resolve it quickly. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and they know how they can protect themselves from harm. All staff, and a majority of parents who responded to their surveys, feel that staff deal with bullying effectively.
- The before-school breakfast club provides a positive start to the day for the pupils who attend. Pupils of all ages mix well with each other, with older pupils enjoying the responsibility of organising activities, for example playing games or completing physical exercises. This is also the case at playtime when a healthy tuck shop is available, organised by older pupils.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about the world around them, including different faiths and cultures. They respond sensitively to each other when working together. Pupils who spoke with an inspector during playtime all agreed that they 'love school'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils understand the school's clear expectations of behaviour and value the praise and rewards received from staff for their contributions and efforts. For example, each week some pupils who have received positive rewards

become 'Hayes' Heroes' and meet with the headteacher. Parents who spoke with inspectors or who responded to their survey were almost unanimous in their view that pupils are well behaved.

- Leaders and staff have high expectations for behaviour and manage it effectively. In lessons, the majority of pupils concentrate well and try to complete their work.
- Pupils know that staff will intervene if they display any challenging behaviour. Leaders have recently introduced a new system for managing behaviour. Staff de-escalate any poor behaviour. Pupils reflect on how they could have behaved differently, with support from learning mentors if necessary. Staff say that they are now handling poor behaviour by pupils more consistently than previously. Pupils' behaviour has improved as a result.
- Last year, fewer pupils were excluded from school compared to the previous year. Current school information suggests that this decline is continuing. Pupil exclusions are now lower than national averages.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to increase attendance. Overall attendance improved in 2017 compared to the previous year. Current attendance figures also show improvement. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent has decreased and is now broadly in line with the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not attend school as regularly as they should. Leaders carefully track the attendance of individual pupils. However, attendance of these groups is still too low.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, the progress and attainment of pupils leaving Year 6 improved from the previous year. Pupils' progress in mathematics was average and their progress in reading was above average. Pupils' progress in writing was well above average. Least-able pupils made better progress than most-able pupils.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in writing at key stage 2 was broadly in line with the national average. Too few pupils achieved the expected and higher standards in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2017 was higher than in 2016. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics increased and were broadly in line with national figures. Key stage 1 pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In the last two years, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been just above the national average. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils.
- Pupils' current assessment information and pupils' workbooks indicate that improvements in pupils' attainment and progress made in 2017 are being sustained. Many current key stage 2 and key stage 1 pupils are working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in writing is slower than their progress in reading and mathematics.

- Previously, by the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils, particularly in mathematics. In some year groups and subjects, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are now closing. In Years 5 and 6, disadvantaged pupils are currently making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress from low starting points across the curriculum, but they do not achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not consistently progress or achieve across all subjects compared to other pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Almost all children enter the early years with skills that are well below those expected for their age. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has increased over the past three years. However, by the end of Reception, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is below the national average.
- Leaders have strengthened links with local nurseries. Staff visit children at home and they invite parents into school before children start school. As a result, staff have a good knowledge of each child when they begin Reception. This helps children to settle quickly and make good progress. Staff focus strongly on children's personal and social development. As a result, children's personal development outcomes are above the national average.
- The leader of early years has an accurate view of the provision's strengths and is aware of areas that need developing. For example, teachers have recently focused on improving children's writing skills. Children's journals show they have moved from simple mark making to writing in structured sentences. From very low starting points, children are making stronger progress in their writing than when they joined school.
- Parents value the support that their children receive from the school staff. Parents receive frequent information about how well their children are progressing. Teachers encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning at home. Children's attendance in Reception has improved due to leaders' positive relationships with parents.
- Teachers and other adults work together as a team and their enthusiasm is infectious. The leader of early years uses the skills of all adults effectively to allow a range of activities to take place. Ongoing assessment of children's abilities allows adults to plan next steps. Every adult knows the children well and understands how to support them in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons to engage and motivate children. Children enjoy their learning and they want to be involved. For example, during the inspection, the teacher used the story of 'The gingerbread man' to create a range of child-led and teacher-led activities. Children used their communication skills to recite the story. Some children practised their number skills by ordering gingerbread men. Another group of children predicted what would happen to the gingerbread man when put in water. Throughout, adults asked children appropriate questions to develop their language skills and move their learning on.

- Children's behaviour is good. They are able to concentrate for a sustained period of time because the activities are interesting. They talk confidently about what they are doing. For example, one child spoke with an inspector about visiting a Chinese restaurant and what they had enjoyed about the experience. Children wait to take their turn happily and share their ideas with other children. Children's relationships with each other and with adults are strong.
- Disadvantaged children make good or better progress from their starting points compared to other children and their outcomes are improving. Leaders use additional funding for these groups of children well to support their needs.
- The indoor environment is welcoming and very well planned, covering all the areas of learning. Leaders have not ensured that activities for children in the outside classroom are as structured as indoor activities. Children miss out on learning opportunities and this slows their progress.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective and meets all statutory requirements. Adults keep children safe and care for them well.

School details

Unique reference number	141633
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10041576

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	371
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Rob Hill
Headteacher	Mrs Maire Hayes
Telephone number	01536 203805
Website	www.ourladys.co.uk
Email address	bursar@ourladys-pri-corby.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in January 2012. The school converted to an academy in March 2015 and became part of the newly formed St Luke Academies Trust.
- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The minority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are above the national averages.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 29 lessons. Some of these lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed two assemblies.
- Inspectors and senior leaders looked at samples of pupils' work covering a range of subjects, abilities and year groups.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and breaktimes. An inspector also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at playtime and lunchtime and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors held a number of meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and newly qualified teachers. The lead inspector met with two members of the local governing body, including the chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with two representatives of the trust, including the school improvement director and the chair of the board of directors.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. The lead inspector also considered the 62 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The lead inspector considered the responses from the pupil online survey and the 40 responses from the staff online survey.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and the self-evaluation summary, safeguarding procedures and records, and minutes of meetings of the local governing body. Inspectors also considered the school's current information on pupils' progress and achievement, attendance records, behaviour logs, external reports on the work of the school and monitoring and evaluation records.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Tuffin	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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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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