

# Kirby Primary Academy

Halstead Road, Kirby Cross, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 0LW

## Inspection dates

23 January and 6 February 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, academy leaders and the trust have strengthened the provision so that teaching and outcomes are now good.
- The quality of teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics is good, and consequently, by the end of Year 6, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The curriculum is broader and much improved since the previous inspection. Pupils experience a wide range of practical and interesting activities that develop their knowledge and understanding in subjects such as history, geography and science.
- Leaders have established a safe and secure environment for learning. Pupils who have experienced difficulties in their lives are well looked after and making good progress.
- Pupils behave well in and around the academy. They treat each other and adults with respect and courtesy. This underpins the calm and orderly atmosphere of the academy.
- Leaders have been effective in making some important improvements to teaching and learning. For example, there is consistently good teaching of phonics and writing across the academy.
- Teaching in early years is good. As a result, children's progress and attainment are improving rapidly.
- Opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide range of sporting activities are a strength of the academy. The additional funding for sports has been used to good effect.
- The trust and governors have supported leaders effectively in making the necessary improvements to teaching and learning since the previous inspection. An important feature of this is the establishment of a stable teaching team for the first time in recent years.
- Weaker teaching in the past has left gaps in pupils' learning and skills. This sometimes hinders progress and helps to explain the low proportions of pupils in the past who attained the higher standards in reading and mathematics and/or greater depth in writing.
- Teaching in key stage 1 is not as effective as the teaching in key stage 2, and consequently the outcomes are not as good. Leaders have made improvements, progress is much better than in the past and standards are rising.
- Assessment is thorough but it is not focused sharply enough on the most important aspects that pupils need to change or improve, particularly where there are gaps in their prior learning.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching and learning in key stage 1 to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils are better prepared for key stage 2.
- Improve the use of assessment, so that it:
  - helps teachers to prioritise the most important steps that pupils need to make to improve their work
  - better identifies the gaps in pupils' learning in different subjects, so that essential knowledge and skills can be revisited and consolidated.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In the past two years, the headteacher and the trust have established a stable teaching team, which has been critical in aiding them in strengthening teaching and learning so that it is now good overall.
- Leaders and governors have a good awareness of the academy's strengths and weaknesses, which is reflected in the improvement plan. Actions to bring about improvement have been put in place in a timely manner. For example, the marked improvement to the teaching and learning of phonics and writing was a result of the accurate recognition of weaknesses that needed rectifying.
- Senior leaders know where teaching is strong and where it needs to be improved. They hold teachers to account and accurately identify their training needs. Teachers value the open and honest feedback they receive from leaders and the opportunities they have to undertake coaching and training.
- The trust provides a good level of support and challenge to the academy. The local authority has provided effective support, for example providing specialist advice in the teaching of early years.
- The funding the school receives through the sports premium is used well. A wide range of clubs and sporting activities are available to pupils, including football, a cardio wall and dance. Specialist training supports staff well, increasing their confidence in teaching sport and physical education effectively.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked hard to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Subjects such as science, history and geography are taught in topics designed to captivate the interest of pupils. For example, pupils knowledgeably gave an explanation of gravity, following the topic on 'Space and beyond' that they completed last term. Excellent use is made of the outside areas of the academy, such as the allotment and forest, where pupils regularly take part in science and geography-based activities.
- Parents and carers speak highly of the academy. They are confident that their children are well looked after and speak well of recent improvements in behaviour. Communication between the academy and parents is good; parents spoke of staff being 'very approachable'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well throughout the academy. Assemblies, the curriculum and enrichment activities are used to good effect to develop pupils' learning. Outside speakers such as the police and fire service strengthen pupils' awareness and links to the local community. Topics such as 'Around the world in 80 days' and 'Dahl's delights' are carefully planned to ensure that pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and to respect the feelings of others.
- The additional funding used for the provision for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used effectively. Additional teaching assistant time has

been allocated to supporting pupils with SEND and resources purchased. As a result, pupils with SEND are making good progress from their starting points.

- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is used skilfully to overcome the individual barriers that they have to their learning. Assessment information in the past indicated that some disadvantaged pupils did not make good progress or reach high enough standards. A detailed examination of the teaching, learning and progress made by these pupils shows that the academy is effective at tailoring provision to their needs so that they make good progress.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have a good awareness of the academy's successes and priorities to improve.
- Governors bring a good breadth of experience to the governing body, including backgrounds in education and health. Governor training has been effective in equipping governors with the knowledge to support academy leaders.
- The local governing body is part of the trust governance of the academy. Governance provides a good level of challenge to the academy leadership.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior leaders have established a culture where pupils feel safe. The safeguarding procedures and practices established by the academy and trust are effective. Robust records are maintained of the checks made to ensure the suitability of adults in the academy to work with children.
- The trust holds the academy to good account for the effectiveness of safeguarding through an annual audit of the safeguarding procedures.
- Safeguarding training is undertaken by all staff and is up to date.
- Parents and carers are confident that the arrangements for keeping children safe are good.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Over the past year, teaching has improved considerably, particularly in key stage 2. Throughout the academy, pupils benefit from well-planned lessons across most subjects that generally meet the needs of different pupils. Typically, lessons are interesting and challenge pupils of all abilities to try their best. Consequently, pupils demonstrate a good attitude to learning and work hard.
- The teaching of phonics has improved consistently, so that pupils are making better progress in reading and in writing. For example, even pupils who find spelling difficult are able to use their phonic knowledge proficiently to attempt complex words when they are writing.

- Historically, the proportions of Year 6 pupils who gain the higher standard in reading and mathematics and/or greater depth in writing have been low. Teachers are addressing this effectively and the work in the books shows that the most able pupils are becoming much more sophisticated when applying the skills that they have learned. For example, the better Year 6 mathematicians use their understanding of number expertly when solving complicated problems associated with geometry.
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants who contribute well to pupils' learning. Teaching assistants work effectively with individual pupils and when pupils are working in groups. They are carefully deployed, have a good level of subject knowledge and develop good relationships with the pupils they work with.
- Teachers use questioning well. Pupils are attentive and respond eagerly. Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas with their partners and in groups. Pupils are confident to talk through what they are learning.
- Pupils benefit from many good opportunities to develop skills and understanding in subjects such as history, geography and science. For example, they regularly carry out science experiments and investigations. During fieldwork activities, map-reading skills are developing proficiently and in history pupils are gaining an understanding of the passage of time through the timelines that they create to explain events in the past.
- The teaching in key stage 1 has been slower to improve, because it has proved harder for leaders to create a stable teaching team. Since September, the team has been stable, and teaching, learning and outcomes are improving. However, some pupils are still catching up on previously lost ground in learning.
- When assessing pupils' work, teachers sometimes pick out too many aspects that they would like pupils to improve upon, particularly if they have identified gaps in learning because of weaker teaching in the past. This means that it is not clear to pupils what the most important things are that they have to concentrate on first.
- Sometimes there are quite large gaps in time between teaching subjects such as history. This means that assessments made by teachers about what pupils have learned in preparation for the next time history is taught are not accurate enough, because they do not take account of what pupils may have forgotten. This can hinder their progress when starting a new topic.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Tolerance and respect for others permeate the life of the academy, with adults demonstrating expected behaviours effectively. As a result, the academy has a calm and welcoming atmosphere.
- There is excellent provision to support the most vulnerable pupils in the academy. Often these pupils arrive outside of normal admission dates exhibiting very challenging behaviours because of the difficulties they have experienced in their lives. Staff are highly skilled at nurturing these pupils, so that they quickly begin to make friends and

progress in lessons. Deservedly, the academy is gaining a good reputation for the work it does with these pupils and their families.

- Pupils are aware of the need to protect themselves from danger, for example the risks of using the internet and being cautious should they be approached by a stranger. Pupils feel safe in the academy, due to the emphasis that leaders place on protecting pupils' health and safety on the site.
- The academy makes good use of initiatives, such as the 'learning pit', the 'Kirby learners' and 'visible learning', to build pupils' resilience to learning. Typically, pupils have good attitudes to learning and persevere well.
- Pupils and parents said instances of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident that, if they have a concern, they can seek help from an adult, and their uneasiness is resolved effectively.
- Assemblies are used to good effect, for example to learn about different religious beliefs and what it means to be part of modern British society. Links with the local community are good, including, for example, links with a local nursing home, developing pupils' social awareness.
- Pupils play and eat together harmoniously at breaktimes. For example, they were patient and orderly while queuing to collect their lunch and they show respect for outdoor equipment.
- The academy provides a breakfast club, which enables pupils to make a good start to the day.
- Pupils are given additional responsibility and a good sense of community through the academy council and the junior leadership team. When they were met during the inspection, members of these groups were confident that their opinions were valued.
- Older pupils take responsibility for the welfare of younger pupils. Pupils were confident that, if they had a difficulty, they could seek help from an older pupil.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are proud of their work and keen to discuss their achievements, such as in writing.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They move around classrooms and corridors sensibly and quietly, holding doors open for each other and adults.
- The academy's expectations of behaviour are applied consistently. Good behaviour is reinforced effectively, with rewards such as certificates. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour have significantly declined, and there have been no exclusions in the past year.
- Leaders have been effective in reducing overall absence and reducing the proportion of pupils who are repeatedly absent. Leaders' checks on attendance are accurate in identifying any group or individuals whose attendance is a concern.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards and progress have improved in reading, writing and mathematics over the past three years in key stage 2, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education at the end of Year 6.
- In other year groups, pupils' work shows that they have made extremely good progress to catch up after experiencing weaker, disrupted teaching in the past. For example, when the Year 4 pupils were in Year 2, only approximately a quarter of them met the expected standard overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Now after 18 months, their work shows that more than half are working at or beyond attainment targets for Year 4.
- Currently the work in books indicates that the most able pupils are reaching higher standards than was the case previously. In Year 2, the proportions of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics have increased. Similarly, in Year 6, more pupils are attaining greater depth in writing and the higher standard in reading and mathematics. This is a considerable improvement on the past.
- When reading, younger pupils who find it hard to recognise words use their phonics skills proficiently to enable them to work out the word, even when it is unfamiliar. Other pupils who find reading easier are enthusiastic about the books they read and are able to explain the stories that they have read accurately.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress. Their achievement is carefully checked. There are effective programmes in place to support pupils with specific needs, and the academy makes good use of outside services.
- Small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in each year group mean that percentages in the school's national data vary and need to be treated with caution. A careful examination of the work in books demonstrates that these pupils are making good progress from their starting points.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2018, pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading and writing. Marked improvements to the teaching of writing and phonics were too new to have had the desired impact at that time. Evidence seen in pupils' books during the inspection shows that pupils are now making much better progress in these subjects, which indicates that standards are higher than they have been in the past. However, unlike in key stage 2, there is not yet any historical evidence to verify the impact of this improvement on raising standards.

## Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of children who attained a good level of development at the end of 2018 was similar to that of other children nationally. This is because they make good progress from their entry points.
- The academy ensures that parents and carers are involved in their children's learning effectively. For example, they are encouraged to take part in their children's learning through the provision of home-learning activities.

- Behaviour, attitudes to learning and relationships are good. Children respond promptly to adult requests to stop or listen. They access carefully planned activities independently and respond well to challenges. Routines are well established. The atmosphere in the classroom is calm, safe and purposeful.
- Progress in developing children's early reading and writing skills is improving through the effective teaching of phonics. Phonics is taught to small groups of children by an additional adult. As a result, individual children's misconceptions are quickly identified and corrected.
- Pupils' confidence in reading unfamiliar words is improving, in part because teachers and teaching assistants pronounce sounds effectively and make the links between sounds and letters.
- Teachers and teaching assistants monitor children's progress carefully and use assessment information well in planning to meet the learning needs of individuals. They know children's strengths and plan their next steps in learning accurately. Outcomes are checked by the local authority and this confirms that teachers' assessments are secure.
- Before children join the early years, the school ensures that it has a good awareness of each child's needs and involves parents well.
- Leaders in the early years have an accurate view of the early years provision, recognising its strengths and where improvements are needed. They are aware, for example, of the need for most-able children to attain better, so that a greater proportion of children exceed the early learning goals by the end of Reception.

## School details

Unique reference number	139806
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10058683

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Lynn Gent
Headteacher	Charlotte Booth-Rylett
Telephone number	01255674056
Website	<a href="http://www.kirbyps.org.uk">www.kirbyps.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@kirbyacademy.org">admin@kirbyacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 September 2016

## Information about this school

- The school opened as an academy on 1 October 2013, sponsored by the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The headteacher was appointed in June 2017.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is low compared to the national average. The majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons from both key stages and the early years. Most observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at the quality of work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their work.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documents.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's assessment information and records of leaders' monitoring.
- Meetings were held with pupils, school staff, governors and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 59 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 35 free-text responses. Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children into the school.
- Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 6 February 2019 to complete the inspection. They visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. They held meetings with the school's leaders, the trust's chief executive officer and groups of pupils.

## Inspection team

Paul Hughes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Welch	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Bristow	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Brooker	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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