

Sunnyside Primary Academy

Reynard Way, Northampton NN2 8QS

Inspection dates

2–3 October 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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal provides strong leadership and has improved the school considerably in the last three years. She and senior leaders are ambitious for all pupils and are focused on the right priorities to move the school forward.
- Leaders and teachers are supported well by Greenwood Academy Trust (GAT). Trustees strategically support and challenge leaders, as they have done throughout the journey of improvement.
- Pupils' learning and progress are good in virtually all year groups. Outcomes in mathematics are particularly positive.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Pupils feel safe in the school and appreciate the many ways in which the school helps them learn to stay safe.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They are confident, respectful and courteous. This is a happy and harmonious school.
- The teaching of phonics is very positive.
- Pupils' overall attendance has improved and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has also reduced.
- Pupils recognise the benefits of the new behaviour system and say it is improving behaviour.
- Parents and carers are positive about how the school supports their children in their learning. They rightly believe the school is very well led and managed.
- Staff morale is very positive. There is a strong team identity and staff are proud to work at Sunnyside.
- Early years provision is good. Children are well cared for and settle quickly to the school. They make good progress in Reception and are well prepared for key stage 1.
- Teaching is good, resulting in positive pupil attitudes and good learning. However, in a minority of classes expectations are not consistently high enough.
- Too small a proportion of key stage 1 pupils attained the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. Activities do not consistently provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils.
- The revised creative curriculum provides for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning. However, the new curriculum is not sufficiently established to show further improvements in higher standards being attained by pupils.
- Pupils' reading comprehension is not as good as it should be.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that greater proportions of pupils work at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics, especially at key stage 1
 - making sure teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are consistently high in all classes
 - further improving pupils' reading comprehension skills by developing their inference and deduction skills
 - ensuring that the revised creative curriculum framework is reviewed and adapted to meet the learning needs of pupils, enabling them to attain even higher standards in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal was appointed three years ago and has established high expectations for pupils and staff. A relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching has brought about much improvement. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress are good.
- The principal and senior leaders have a clear focus on further developing this inclusive school. They have successfully brought about significant change and improvement across the school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and informs the school improvement plan. Strategic priorities are appropriate and build on improvements over the last three years.
- Middle leaders are very effective in their roles. They are supported and challenged well by senior leaders.
- There is a strong senior leadership partnership which is highly respected by staff. Overwhelmingly, staff who responded to the staff survey commented on their faith in leadership, believing the school to be well led and managed.
- Leaders have been supported by GAT through the work of senior education advisers. This regular support and training have led to enhanced leadership capacity and sustained improvements in teaching and pupils' progress.
- Leadership of teaching is strong. Staff value the professional development opportunities provided to improve their teaching. New teachers are supported particularly well by experienced teachers and mentors.
- Leaders know pupils very well. They analyse the progress of different groups of pupils effectively to find out where there are gaps in learning. While leaders identify interventions for groups and classes, they are also very clear about knowing the learning and pastoral needs of individual pupils. Leaders use meetings about pupils' progress well to ensure that teachers plan for pupils' needs.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used effectively. Regular monitoring indicates that pupils gain academically, behaviourally and emotionally, according to their need.
- Support for disadvantaged pupils is having a positive impact on these pupils' academic learning and personal development.
- The curriculum offers many opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has a strong focus on pupils' well-being. However, the revised creative curriculum has not been in place long enough to have the impact of raising pupil outcomes further.
- Pupils value the many extra-curricular opportunities provided, especially the sporting and end-of-school day family room activities. Pupils also take responsibility for some of these opportunities. For example, pupils planned fundraising activities to sponsor the Year 6 visit to London and overnight stay on HMS Belfast.

Governance of the school

- Trustees understand their roles and responsibilities very well. They make regular checks to ensure that the information they receive from the school's leaders is accurate.
- Trust leadership is effective. It has provided considerable support and challenge to bring about much improvement in the last three years. Trustees make sure that safeguarding arrangements are secure and that they meet their statutory duties.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and trustees ensure that all aspects of safeguarding arrangements work well and are fit for purpose.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Pupils feel safe and parents express confidence about their children's safety at school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in school and online.
- Staff are appropriately trained in different aspects of safeguarding. They are clear about how to report any worries or concerns they have about pupils who may be at risk of harm.
- Procedures for checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and any other visitors are robust. Leaders work with colleagues at GAT to make sure that thorough systems are in place to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding act swiftly to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are kept safe. They work well with external agencies and are insistent in ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place.
- Parents who expressed their views through Parent View, the online survey, overwhelmingly commented that their children are happy and are safe at school.
- Many parents speak positively about the family support worker and the pastoral care given by staff. When required, intervention and support for pupils and their families are offered at the earliest opportunity.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know their pupils well and plan work that enables most pupils to make good progress.
- Secure teacher subject knowledge leads to effective questioning in the majority of classes. Teachers check carefully that pupils have gained knowledge and understand concepts. Pupils are encouraged to give reasons for their answers and develop further confidence in their learning.
- High expectations that pupils will work with positive attitudes are apparent in most classes. The clear majority of pupils are engaged and enjoy their learning. This helps pupils develop their skills, gain knowledge and deepen their understanding. However, the most able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to make the maximum progress, especially in reading.

- Teachers have worked to implement a consistent approach to teaching mathematics across the school. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- Phonics sessions are taught in purposeful and engaging ways. Teachers' subject knowledge is consistently good across classes. Pupils learn to segment and blend sounds accurately and apply these skills well in reading and writing.
- Pupils are expected to read at home. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said this happens on a regular basis. Reading diaries show that pupils enjoy their reading. However, their comprehension of text is not as well developed as it should be.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well. They benefit from working in small groups where necessary. The positive relationships between adults and pupils promote these pupils' confidence and self-belief. As a result, pupils become more resilient in overcoming barriers to their learning and personal development.
- In a small minority of classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough and pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This leads to off-task chatter and low-level disruption.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is a caring school, with a family feel that enables each pupil to be known and valued. As a result, pupils are happy.
- Most pupils have a confident attitude to learning which is having a positive impact on their progress.
- Pupils feel safe at school. Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. The pupils who spoke to inspectors say there is no bullying at Sunnyside. They are confident that any concerns or worries would be swiftly dealt with by an adult.
- The strong focus on respect underpins a themed approach to personal development. This enables pupils to engage in self-reflection and in appreciating positive qualities in each other. As a result, pupils' self-esteem, personal confidence and mutual respect are strengthened.
- Pupils' aspirations are developed through an annual careers day, which introduces pupils to the world of work. Pupils find these opportunities interesting. They broaden their horizons and help pupils to think about their future aspirations.
- Leaders are trained to understand the mental health needs of pupils. They work with external agencies to further develop the well-being of pupils through the provision of counselling and bereavement support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite to visitors and get on well together.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance has improved, and the proportion of persistent absences has greatly reduced. Leaders work closely with the few parents whose children do not attend as regularly as they ought to.

- The school is a pleasant and welcoming environment. Pupils take pride in their work, and value the displays and the new library area.
- In most lessons, pupils are well behaved and confident. On occasions, some pupils lose concentration and become restless. This happens when pupils are not sufficiently engaged and challenged by the work.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress is good. Leaders have a rigorous way of accurately checking pupils' progress. Teachers use this information to plan teaching to meet the needs of most pupils.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that pupils make good gains in their learning over time. Leaders meet regularly with teachers to check pupils' progress. Teachers are working effectively to diminish differences between the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Progress in mathematics is particularly strong with pupils being fluent in their calculations. Pupils successfully apply calculation skills and their reasoning skills to solve mathematical problems.
- Progress in writing is strong because pupils are taught to write well for a range of purposes. They have opportunities to write across the curriculum and respond well to teacher feedback.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, especially in mathematics. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the appropriate support to make good progress according to their specific needs.
- A higher proportion of pupils than found nationally met the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check. However, reading comprehension is weaker in older years.
- In 2018, proportionally more pupils attained the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 than in 2016 and 2017. This represents improved progress over time. However, work in books and in classes shows that the most able pupils require more challenge to deepen their learning further.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average in 2018 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the improved quality of teaching, learning and assessment is having an impact on pupils' learning and progress. Work in books and accurate assessment data indicate that pupils in key stage 1 make good progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter early years with a range of skills and abilities. Most have skills below those typical for their age. Because of good teaching, children make strong progress and achieve well by the end of the Reception Year. The development of their reading, writing and mathematics skills is strong. This means they are well prepared for Year 1.

- High expectations mean that children learn routines quickly. They enjoy making independent choices when they have self-directed learning time, and work well in directed sessions.
- The environment is stimulating and reinforces learning through different senses and experiences. Children show inquisitive attitudes in wanting to explore and learn through a range of planned opportunities.
- Behaviour and attitudes in the Reception classes are very good. Children settle quickly and happily to their work. Positive relationships are developed and nurtured. Children are respectful of each other and adults. This helps them make good progress.
- There is a strong team approach to the early years provision. Teachers and support staff are highly skilled in questioning children. Teaching of phonics is strong, and children learn to read and write through this very effective teaching.
- Children who have SEN and/or disabilities are given good support. The school works effectively with external agencies to provide for the needs of these children.
- During the inspection, adults were seen to assess children. Teachers use this information to plan next steps in learning for each child. As a result, children learn quickly.
- Parents who met with inspectors spoke positively about the transition processes as their children start their school career. They say their children are very well cared for.

School details

Unique reference number	139113
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10054929

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	367
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Nicola Sayers
Telephone number	01604 842 958
Website	www.sunnysideprimaryacademy.org/
Email address	admin@sunnysideprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	17–18 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average primary school, which became an academy in February 2013.
- The school is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust. Trustees of the trust are the appropriate authority.
- The trust provides support for the school through its regular training and monitoring visits.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is also lower than the national figure.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons or parts of lessons. Senior leaders carried out 11 observations jointly with inspectors. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books with senior leaders and sampled books in classes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, other leaders and members of staff, and spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector met the multi-academy trust chief executive officer as well as two school education advisers.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and pupils around the school. In addition, they evaluated 59 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 58 free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised several documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, GAT quality assurance and monitoring review, minutes of the academy advisory council, improvement plans, and school information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors also considered behaviour and attendance information, and policies and procedures relating to: special educational needs, pupil premium funding, PE and sport premium funding, safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Savage	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Heery	Ofsted Inspector

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