

# Sidegate Primary School

Sidegate Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 4JD

## Inspection dates

15–16 March 2017

<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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Teaching in the early years is effective and helps children to make a strong start to learning. The proportion of children who achieve the good level of development is above average.
- The specially resourced unit for pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities provides good support for them.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the mainstream school achieve as well as their peers with similar starting points.
- Teaching develops pupils' phonic knowledge well. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard in key stage 1 in 2016.
- Strong senior and middle leadership has been highly effective in securing improved outcomes for all groups of pupils in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have ensured that the majority of the pupils currently in key stage 2 are working at age-related expectations in these subjects. Pupils' progress is tracked frequently to make sure that the most able pupils achieve greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Subject leaders plan to improve the progress and mastery of the most able pupils in science and in the humanities but the impact is less evident than in core subjects.
- Senior leaders, along with the extended leadership team, have provided tailored and extensive support for teachers in order to improve their skills. Most teaching is now good.
- Personal development is remarkably strong because the pupils themselves have been active in drawing up their 'learning gang' attributes and monitoring the impact of these on their behaviour for learning.
- An extensive range of enrichment activities excites pupils and raises their aspirations to learn. Physical education and the arts are taught to a very high standard.
- Attendance is monitored meticulously and is now average.
- Current information shows that pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding are making rates of progress in most years that are similar to or better than their peers but there is more work to be done to ensure that all make the progress they are capable of.
- Committed governors have streamlined their committee structure and recruited a new group of supportive trust and parent governors. Induction and training in how to challenge leaders effectively is planned but has yet to take place.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen leadership and management further, by:
  - arranging comprehensive training for the new cohort of governors so that they are fully equipped to challenge and support leaders about the quality of teaching, learning and pupil outcomes.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further, by:
  - building upon the good practice already established for challenging the most able pupils in English and mathematics to provide activities in other subjects that help them to master deeper thinking across the curriculum
  - further develop new strategies to ensure that disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 achieve or exceed national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, ably supported by her senior leadership team, has successfully moved school improvement forward since the school became an academy. Her commitment and ambition for her pupils have created a very positive learning culture within the school. It is a tribute to the strength of the leadership team that improvements to teaching, assessment and pupils' outcomes have continued during the headteacher's absence.
- Middle leaders, a team formed of early years, key subject leaders and three phase leaders accountable for key stage 1, lower key stage 2 and upper key stage 2, form a highly effective group who monitor, evaluate and support staff development in their respective areas of responsibility. Their regular checks have supported improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes. The leadership of key subjects, such as English and mathematics, is strong. The phase leaders manage the performance of teachers in their respective year groups and provide tailored support including team teaching with them to secure improvements to groups of pupils' learning, including the most able and the disadvantaged.
- Leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. Leadership in the specially resourced provision is effective because the pupils are very well known as individuals and their progress in a wide curriculum is checked carefully. Staff are supported and coached to meet high expectations for their pupils. Response to individual needs is positive with a Braille club organised and an 'autism champion' appointed who expertly supports adults to meet the needs of this group of pupils. Across both the special unit and the mainstream school, interventions are tailored to specific needs and monitored frequently to measure their impact upon pupils' progress. Links with parents are well developed so that they are helped to support their children.
- Professional development opportunities for teaching staff are tailored to make sure that specific aspects of a teacher's work are supported so that they can meet their pupil progress targets. Newly qualified and trainee teachers are very satisfied with the support that they are receiving. They say their mentors are very approachable and have helped them to refine their practice and deepen their understanding.
- The curriculum is rich, broad and balanced. The arts enrich learning in the humanities. For example, the school has a 'museum' of artefacts that enrich pupils' understanding of history with collections of primary sources as well as artwork inspired by different periods. For example, the Great Fire of London was commemorated last summer with parents and their children building models of Jacobean houses that were then taken out on the field and set safely alight. The paintings and poems inspired by this event are highlights of the museum collection.
- An extensive range of extra-curricular activities enriches the sporting, artistic and musical opportunities available to pupils. A local Indian association sponsored a project in key stage 1 so that the pupils' understanding of geography was enhanced memorably with food, costumes and story-telling. Trips and visits extend the pupils' horizons and raise their self-confidence. A large proportion of pupils are in the school

choir that performed recently at Snape Maltings. Residential visits in key stage 2 include the pupils from the specially resourced base successfully. Additional funding for physical education and sports is spent wisely and well-monitored. An increased number of pupils participate in clubs, including the very popular girls' football teams.

- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is audited carefully. The improved progress for these pupils, in almost all year groups, is a result of a trust-commissioned review and it is a leadership priority to refine the strategy further to diminish the difference between the outcomes for these pupils compared with all other pupils nationally. Their focus is now on equipping staff to support this group in their classrooms. The school is beginning to use the pupil premium funding effectively.
- Funding for support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well targeted and monitored to provide value for money. This is evident because there is little difference between most of these pupils' progress and that of their classmates.
- The school's values support and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The school is a harmonious community. Pupils learn not just to be tolerant of different cultures but to embrace and celebrate them. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were genuinely shocked that people could be discriminated against on the basis of race or religion. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain with mock elections as well as engagement in fundraising for community groups. There is a large number of pupils engaged with the local council on a town re-wilding project that will include planting trees and looking after wildlife on the school grounds.
- Communication with parents and families on a daily and informal basis is good. The school's website is an effective showcase for information, pupils' successes and news. Of the number of parents that responded to the online questionnaire, the response was very positive about their children's happiness, safety and behaviour at the school. The inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and their response was also positive in that their children are happy at the school and the majority believe that they can approach the staff with confidence that any concerns will be addressed.
- The Active Learning Trust offers support by providing leaders with visits from improvement advisers who have, for example, helped to identify priorities for the provision for disadvantaged pupils. The trust also plans to support the reorganisation of the school's governance with mentoring for new governors.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body has been streamlined this year to ensure that the full governing body, rather than committees, meet to consider all aspects of their work. Minutes of meetings this academic year show that the chair of the governing body is posing more challenge to leaders about pupils' outcomes.
- A significant number of new governors have been recruited this academic year and they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. They require training in how to pose effective questions and use their time in school to hold teachers and leaders to account for the impact of their work on teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors are assiduous in carrying out their duties to ensure that safeguarding and health and safety requirements are met.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's systems and procedures meet requirements and are checked regularly by school and trust leaders.
- Staff training for child protection, the 'Prevent' duty and first aid is up to date and the school's processes for checking the suitability of new staff are robust. Leaders regularly check staff understanding of safeguarding. Teaching in the curriculum ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The most vulnerable pupils, including young carers, are well known to staff. The school has a culture of care and highly effective family liaison. The senior team prioritise safeguarding at all their meetings and act rapidly when concerns are raised.
- In the specially resourced provision, all staff have received additional training in using restraint safely. Correct procedures are followed and parents informed if such actions are necessary.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers plan lessons that are informed appropriately by an assessment of what pupils have previously learned. Some teachers have also become very effective at using probing questions to assess pupils' understanding during lessons and adjusting the pace and amount of support they receive in the light of pupils' answers.
- Learning support assistants make effective use of their training to contribute to the progress made during lessons, by small groups or individuals, because they present activities in small and manageable steps.
- Teachers communicate their expectations of what pupils can do to improve their work clearly, using a feedback policy that has been recently revised. Pupils are receptive to this clarity. Most pupils could explain what they had learned in English and mathematics and described their own progress when they talked to inspectors.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is effective; in these subjects, teachers provide pupils with clear objectives and check on learning frequently. This is because a new assessment system has been introduced to measure progress. The phase leaders organise support rapidly for both pupils and teachers if any pupils are falling behind. Teachers track pupils as they develop new skills and learning in these subjects and are held to account regularly by phase leaders. This has led to demonstrably faster progress as seen in the pupils' books.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' progress in subjects such as science and the humanities is less strong for the most able because training on how to make tasks suitably challenging is a recent development.
- Teaching in the arts and physical education is very strong. Inspectors saw very precise skills being developed in physical education with specialist vocabulary emphasised for pupils to evaluate their own performance and areas for development. Vibrant art work is supplemented with pupils' own assessment of the style and methods used by the artists whose work has influenced their own efforts. The provision of class sets of

instruments and the engagement of music specialists for Year 4, for example, resulted in an exceptional clarinet ensemble performance as part of their music lesson.

- In the specially resourced provision, the older pupils concentrate well and are making good progress because teachers and staff have high expectations and make sure that tasks are well matched to individuals' needs. For example, in a maths session tasks were extended from different starting points. Two pupils were supported by a learning support assistant to practise national curriculum test questions because her questions enabled them to explain their answers. Younger pupils are able to learn effectively because staff know the pupils very well and are able to draw upon a wide range of resources to keep them motivated.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The pupils' own involvement in drawing up the behaviour for learning system and in recruiting pupil ambassadors to monitor its impact is remarkably effective. Pupils' consultations developed a set of attributes of good learners, linked to the school's name; 'I' for innovative, 'D' for determined, for example. The attributes were then linked to names such as 'Determined Davina' in a 'learning gang'. Pupils' full involvement in developing this approach has ensured that the majority of pupils are fully committed to it.
- Not only are discussions valued in lessons about what type of learning will be addressed but pupil ambassadors also conduct learning walks to evaluate and report to leaders about how the 'gang' are being used in classes.
- Pupils from the specially resourced provision are well integrated in the pupil ambassador scheme, showing visitors around the school with courtesy and pride in their environment.
- Pupils are welcoming to visitors and are friendly towards each other around the school. They listen well to adults and to each other. Levels of respect are exemplary, with pupils able to explain the difference between equity and equality, for example. In the words of one pupil, this is a school where it is safe to be different, 'because all young people are unique and that is what makes us special'. They also speak very highly of the ways in which staff take the time to help them.
- Pupils are well prepared for their future with school-wide events at which cryptologists, midwives or engineers helping to develop understanding of the world of work and raising pupils' aspirations.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good
- Inspectors' own observations confirm pupils' views that, in lessons and around the school, they conduct themselves well and treat their environment with respect.
- On the playground, pupils behave in a mature fashion by, for example, lining up

promptly. In the dining room, they are helpful and considerate towards their peers.

- School records show that disruption in lessons and bullying are both rare.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors and a large majority of parents who returned survey forms were positive about the way that school staff deal with and inform them quickly of any behaviour successes or concerns.
- Levels of attendance have improved and rates of persistent absence diminished since the 2015/2016 school year because school leaders have made this a priority. Celebration of good attendance has helped to make sure that attendance is now in line with the national average.
- In the specially resourced provision, pupils have a good attitude to learning and conduct themselves calmly and with good manners outside class. Attendance in the setting is in line with peers in the school, with some noteworthy improvements for pupils who transferred to Sidegate School from other settings.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- Pupils across the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors' evaluations of work in pupils' books shows good progress and verifies that almost all pupils in key stage 2 are working at age-related expectations in these subjects.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who are on track to meet the required standard in the phonics screening check is high. This was also the case last year when the proportion of pupils meeting this standard was above average. Effective teaching and close monitoring of pupils' progress mean that pupils are gaining important skills in reading at an early age. Disadvantaged pupils last year were less successful than their classmates in the phonics check but by the end of Year 2 these pupils catch up. Pupils of all ages told the inspectors that they enjoy reading and use the well-stocked school library regularly.
- At the end of Year 2 in 2016, pupils from their different starting points attained in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and more than the national average attained greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics. Current information suggests that this good progress in key stage 1 is continuing.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2016 it was a more mixed picture, with mathematics outcomes broadly in line with national averages for expected attainment and most able pupils achieving the national average for greater depth in the subject. In writing, however, while the proportions reaching expected outcomes were broadly in line with the average, few of the most able pupils attained the greater depth typical of the most able nationally. In reading, the most able were below the national average for attaining greater depth as well as for spelling, punctuation and grammar – in which pupils of all abilities in this school attained below the national average.
- For the pupils currently on roll in key stage 2, the picture is more positive. The proportions working at age-related expectations in all year groups are higher than at a similar stage last year. The ways in which reading, writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught have all been revised this year. Pupils' progress is checked frequently by phase leaders and precise targets are set for every teacher to maximise

pupils' progress.

- The most able pupils in all year groups are on track to exceed age-related expectations and their skills in reading were impressive. Disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress, from lower starting points, than their peers. Inspectors' scrutiny of writing and mathematics books showed good and accelerated progress since the start of this year.
- Tracking information shows that the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the vast majority of year groups is in line with or exceeds that of their classmates. This is because the support that they receive is monitored very carefully and tailored precisely to their needs. Scrutiny of the books in the specially resourced provision shows that pupils are making strong progress in a wide range of subjects.
- The pupil premium grant is spent effectively because the difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and their classmates is diminishing by the end of Year 6. Currently, most disadvantaged pupils are making as much, and in some cases more, progress than their peers. Leaders recognise that the target now is to diminish the difference between their attainment and that of all pupils nationally.
- Subject leaders are beginning to develop methods of tracking progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. For example, ways of assessing writing in science, history and the arts are being introduced but it is too early to see the impact of these developments on pupils' performance.
- Pupils are well prepared for secondary school. Their skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics are now in line with age-related expectations and they have very positive attitudes to learning.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Children make consistently good rates of progress in relation to their starting points. Most children join the school with skills below those that are typical for their age. The strong progress supported in the early years has resulted in proportions in excess of the national average leaving the Reception classes with good levels of development. This positive trend seen since the school became an academy is set to continue for the children currently in Reception.
- This strong progress is evident for all groups, including those children who are new to learning English and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children are well equipped by the end of Reception to make a smooth transition to the phonics and mathematical demands of Year 1.
- Children are taught effectively by a well-led team of teachers and teaching assistants. Adults prompt the children to develop their vocabulary and self-expression in full sentences with gently persistent questions that set high expectations. This was seen when the children were using the phonics 'washing line' to promote greater accuracy and in the outdoor area when staff and volunteers persevered in eliciting reasoned explanations from the children about their chosen boat designs.
- Assessment is frequent, as shown in detailed learning journey records. It draws upon a range of different media to show children's artistic and social development in addition



to their progress towards literacy and mathematical goals. The staff team meets weekly to update assessment records and planning, if necessary, to improve progress. For example, a change was made to include daily whole-class number sessions and this has promoted better progress among the children.

- Home–school learning journeys are shared with parents. Parents contribute to the online learning journeys and assessment of their children’s progress. Parents are also encouraged to attend ‘hot topics’ sharing sessions. Recent topics for these events have included phonics and mathematics. The sessions help to equip parents to better support their children outside school with correct letter formation, for example.
- The environment is bright and welcoming, and staff use both the indoor and outdoor areas skilfully to provide children with a stimulating range of activities to help them to learn. Well-established routines help the children to respond positively to adults and to each other. They collaborate well and use their initiative, for example to sort and tidy equipment away upon transition to a new activity.
- Safeguarding is effective within the early years setting. The children told inspectors that they feel safe and their parents agree. Staff are well trained to manage first aid and understand how to keep children safe.
- The Active Learning Trust has provided positive support to the early years leader and her team with regular moderation of the standards that children achieve. The headteacher is also supportive of professional development in this phase, accompanying the phase leader to Early Excellence training to better understand how this will link to whole-school priorities.
- It has been recognised that more rapid progress in writing is a priority for further development. During the inspection, for example, children were encouraged to write letters in a bottle from those shipwrecked by pirates but few took up this challenge, preferring role play or boat-building. Leaders are developing plans to promote more writing opportunities in the children’s daily activities.

## School details

Unique reference number	140822
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10026122

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	645
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Mr Steve Wildon
Headteacher	Mrs Wendy James
Telephone number	01473 727319
Website	<a href="http://www.sidegate.net">www.sidegate.net</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:mail@sidegate.net">mail@sidegate.net</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about publishing the pupil premium strategy for this academic year on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish. While leaders were not able to identify some elements during the inspection, subsequent checks have confirmed that the trust address and funding agreement are on the linked trust website.
- This school is much larger than most primary schools. There are three classes for each year group, including Reception children.
- The school also has a key stage 1 and a key stage 2 class for specially resourced provision (SSC) for pupils with special educational needs. In total, the classes support 19 pupils who have complex, moderate learning needs.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is below average. Nonetheless, the proportion of pupils

supported with an education, health and care plan is above average.

- The proportion of pupils in this school eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- By far the largest groups of pupils are those of White British or other White heritage, with a much smaller than average proportion from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well below the national average, although more pupils who are new to the country and the English language have joined the school recently.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school converted to become an academy with the Active Learning Trust on 1 May 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in lessons, including those in the specially resourced provision, and visited groups of pupils in additional sessions with professional tennis coaches and with visiting parents in Year 1. In lessons, they looked at pupils' books in order to evaluate the quality of learning over time.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work for a range of national curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors met pupils in formal meetings as well as informal settings in and around the school.
- Inspectors met four governors and held a meeting with a representative from the Active Learning Trust.
- Inspectors considered the 120 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with parents at the start of the school day
- There were 205 responses to pupil questionnaires. Inspectors considered these and the 51 responses to staff questionnaires as well as their views expressed in several meetings.
- Inspectors reviewed records provided by the school, including information about pupils' progress, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and documents relating to behaviour, attendance and the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

## Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Simon Webb	Ofsted Inspector
Tania Perry	Ofsted Inspector
Joseph Figg	Ofsted Inspector

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