

# Little Plumstead Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	121119
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	380169
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Rob McKeown

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo Quarterman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sonia Innes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hospital Road Little Plumstead Norwich NR13 5EW
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	20–21 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	380169



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Rob McKeown

Additional inspector

Piers Ranger

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent time observing teaching, which included visiting 16 lessons taught by seven teachers and one visiting specialist. The inspectors heard some pupils read from Years 1 and 2. They held meetings with pupils and staff, including the senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school development plan, monitoring reports, attainment and progress data, teachers' planning and pupils' work. They observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures. The inspectors also analysed 92 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, 89 from pupils and 15 from staff.

## Information about the school

Little Plumstead is a rural primary school that is smaller than average. The number on roll is rising. This year the youngest children started school at the beginning of the academic year instead of in the term of their fifth birthday. Pupils are taught in six classes, the younger pupils in single-age year groups and the older pupils in mixed-age classes. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational needs, is increasing, and is currently close to the national average. The school moved to a new building in October 2011 to accommodate the rise in pupil numbers. It has had a change of headteacher since its last inspection.

The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school, which is popular with parents and benefits from a recent move to excellent accommodation. It has come through a period of significant change since its last inspection and is now well-placed to improve its overall effectiveness. It is not a good school because not enough of the teaching is good, and so pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- Most pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Children are getting a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where provision is meeting their needs particularly well. Good progress is also made by pupils in the other year groups that benefit from good teaching.
- Teaching is satisfactory. It is better in some year groups, including Reception. Not enough teaching is producing good learning and progress because the pace can be slow and work is not always matched precisely enough to pupils' learning needs. There is also inconsistency in the way teachers assess pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and the school has a safe, friendly and welcoming atmosphere in which to learn. Pupils have positive attitudes, are polite, considerate and happy to talk about their enjoyment of school. School assemblies contribute well to pupils' strong spiritual, moral and social development. Attendance is above average and very few pupils are persistently absent.
- Leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. Senior leaders and the governing body are ambitious and determined to improve the school's overall effectiveness. The school's work is monitored, but evaluation is not always sharply focused on the impact the changes in provision have on outcomes for pupils. Relationships with parents are good and positive steps are being taken to engage them more in supporting their children's learning.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
  - ensuring tasks are pitched more precisely to the learning needs of pupils of all abilities and lessons are conducted at a good pace
  - ensuring the teaching of phonics (how sounds and letters are linked) is systematic and structured in Key Stage 1
  - adopting a more consistently good approach to assessment in lessons, in marking pupils' work and helping pupils to see how to improve their responses and reach higher levels
  - ensuring monitoring of lessons focuses on the quality of pupils' learning, and identifies and sets clear targets for improvements in teaching
  - sharing, through modelling, the good teaching and effective learning that is evident in a majority of classes.
  
- Strengthen the contribution made by leaders at all levels towards improving provision and pupils' achievement by:
  - adopting a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating provision, for example the support provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and the changes introduced in the teaching of early reading
  - ensuring a wider contribution is made by all staff in leading and managing developments and evaluating the impact on pupils' achievement.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children start school with skills and aptitudes broadly as expected for their age, although this varies from year to year. More recently a higher proportion of children have joined the school with less well-developed personal and communication skills. Children in the Reception class this year are making good progress and are set to reach higher levels of attainment than in 2011. A more systematic approach to teaching phonics is enabling Reception children to make rapid progress with their communication and literacy skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 who find reading challenging have not benefitted from such a structured approach. Their word decoding skills do not reflect the same systematic and precise teaching. Nevertheless, many more able pupils make good progress and attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2. As pupils get older, guided reading sessions help to broaden reading skills, so most pupils become competent readers, reaching above average attainment by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2.

The attainment of pupils leaving the school in Year 6 in English and mathematics has varied appreciably in the last three years, but is broadly average. Progress has varied from good to inadequate. Girls in particular and some pupils with special educational needs have not been making enough progress, especially in mathematics. Work in

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pupils' books, evidence from lessons and from the school's own tracking data show that most pupils are currently making satisfactory progress. Leaders acknowledge that progress for some boys in writing and for some girls in mathematics needs accelerating, and these are priorities in the current school improvement plan.

Most parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress and many pupils currently do so in the classes where the teaching is good. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils, although the school can point to examples of where individual pupils receiving additional support are making good progress. In some lessons, the learning for pupils with lower ability or special educational needs is not always matched precisely enough to the levels they have reached and this slows down their progress. Pupils of higher ability usually achieve well and benefit from attending additional extension sessions in and out of school.

### **Quality of teaching**

In a majority of lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching was good; this matches most parents' and carers' views of the quality of teaching in the school. However, over time the teaching is satisfactory because it is resulting in satisfactory progress. Inspectors also saw some less effective teaching. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and caters successfully for all children. Meticulous planning, well-chosen resources and exciting topics provide children with stimulating activities in all the areas of learning. Adult-taught sessions are balanced well with the opportunities children have to choose what they would like to learn indoors and in the outdoor area. Imaginative teaching captures and sustains children's interests and includes elements of awe and wonder.

Good teaching seen elsewhere in the school is matched precisely to pupils' learning needs. Teachers explain clearly what pupils will be learning and what they expect them to do to make their learning successful. There are good opportunities for pupils to engage in independent and cooperative learning, solve problems and use practical resources to support their understanding, for example when Year 2 pupils were investigating how they could transport rugby players to a competition in cars with different numbers of seats. In successful lessons, teachers also monitor pupils' learning through the lesson to assess their progress, and teaching assistants provide effective support. In lessons where the teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is slower because teachers take too long over explanations and pupils lose interest. Teaching is not so well matched to the learning needs of all pupils because it is not pitched precisely enough for the different ability groups. The match of learning tasks is sometimes better when pupils move into group work after whole-class teaching but by then too much learning time has been lost. In less successful lessons, teachers are not assessing as they go along, then adjusting their teaching to reshape tasks and explanations to make learning more effective.

There is some inconsistency in the way teachers assess pupils' learning. The quality of marking and target setting is better in English than in mathematics and not always

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as detailed in pupils' topic books. There is also inconsistency in the systems used to assess progress and help pupils to see the steps they need to take to reach a higher level in their work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well through the good relationships between staff and pupils, and the expectations made for good behaviour.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good and this is reflected in lessons and in their conduct around the school. Parents are happy with the way the school manages pupils' behaviour and with how pupils behave. Pupils have positive attitudes, are polite, friendly and welcoming, and happy to talk about their enjoyment of school. Their questionnaire responses were not as positive as those of their parents but discussions with pupils show that they have a clear understanding of the expectations placed on them. There are good systems for monitoring pupils' behaviour and for logging any infrequent incidents that are unacceptable. Pupils say that bullying is rare and they know about most of the different types of bullying that could occur. The very occasional reported incidents of bullying are taken seriously by staff and resolved quickly. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff provide excellent role models and cater very well for children's personal, social and emotional development. Children play happily together, sharing resources and showing very positive attitudes to learning.

Assemblies are used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development. Pupils' behaviour and engagement in assemblies is excellent and their involvement in singing together and spiritual reflection enhances their all-round personal development. Parents, carers and pupils rightly believe that the school is a safe place for their children. Staff supervision is good and the school site is safe and secure. In lessons, pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Attendance is above average and this reflects pupils' enjoyment of school. The school keeps a close check on any pupils who may have lower attendance, monitoring and supporting the very few pupils who have more persistent absence.

### **Leadership and management**

An ambitious leadership team is moving the school forward after a period of staff change and temporary leadership arrangements. Provision has improved in the Early Years Foundation Stage and professional development has been used appropriately to improve teaching. The headteacher and other senior leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths in the school and know the aspects that require further improvement. Together with the governing body, they demonstrate a secure capacity to bring about further improvement. The current development priorities are set out in a detailed improvement plan, which includes boosting achievement, improving aspects of teaching and strengthening leadership and management. Pupils' attainment is tracked systematically and meetings are held with teachers to discuss pupils' progress. More recently appointed members of staff have taken on the key leadership responsibilities for English and mathematics. Senior leaders

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acknowledge that the part played by some other staff in sharing leadership and management responsibilities is underplayed. For example, the special educational needs coordinator provides good advice to staff on how to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs; however, too little emphasis is given in this role to the strategic management of the overall provision and to evaluating the impact and teaching of the programmes used to help boost pupils' achievement. Leaders have completed termly observations of lessons to evaluate the quality of teaching but the records from these observations do not focus closely on the quality of pupils' learning and are not always precise enough about how it can be improved. Models of good teaching are not shared in order to improve the overall quality across the school.

The curriculum is satisfactory with a number of good elements. It contributes effectively to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have the chance to take part in a varied range of enrichment activities in lunchtime- and after-school clubs. Pupils' good achievements in sport and in the creative arts also reflect the strengths in these aspects of the curriculum. There are good links with parents and the deputy headteacher is leading an excellent initiative organising well-attended reading cafes to engage more parents in supporting their children's learning at home. The pastoral care and support of pupils are good. There is no discrimination and all pupils are given equal opportunities to be successful. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has suitable mechanisms for keeping a check on how well the school is doing. Members of the governing body make visits to the school to see it in action but acknowledge that the outcomes from these could be used and recorded more systematically to increase their influence on promoting improvement. The governing body ensures, together with senior staff, that safeguarding procedures are robust and meet requirements.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Little Plumstead Church of England Primary School, Norwich, NR13 5EW**

Thank you for making me and my colleague feel very welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and the assemblies, talking to you about your learning and looking at your work. This helped us decide that you attend a satisfactory school. Some things are good and some things need improving. This is what we found:

- most of you are making satisfactory progress and improving your skills in reading, writing and mathematics
- you get on well together and behave well in lessons and when you are playing together outside
- many of your lessons are good ones and your teachers do their best to make your learning interesting
- there are lots of good sporting and creative arts activities for you to enjoy
- the staff care for you well, keep you safe and want you to be successful
- the adults at the school are determined to make it even better for you.

We asked you headteacher and the governing body to improve some things, such as:

- making sure more teaching is good, so work is not too hard and not too easy and you learn quickly
- making sure marking always helps you to improve your work
- taking a closer look at how well you get on in lessons and in your group work to check that you are learning enough.

You can do your bit to help by working hard and doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown  
Lead inspector

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