

Warren School

Clarks Lane, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, NR33 8HT

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in the Nursery from their low starting points on entry. Good progress continues through Reception enabling most children to successfully re-integrate this year into mainstream schools.
- Pupils throughout the school make good progress, particularly in literacy, numeracy, communication and social interaction skills.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress, particularly in independence skills as a result of good teaching and good leadership. This prepares them well for further education.
- Good teaching enables pupils to learn well. Teachers make good use of well-chosen resources to stimulate learning, promoting communication, literacy and numeracy skills effectively in lessons. They manage behaviour well and have high expectations for learning.
- Pupils behave well, stay safe and have good attitudes to learning. Attendance is above average. Exclusions and the use of physical restraint are rare.
- Under the excellent direction of the headteacher, leadership and management are good. Rigorous monitoring of teaching, with effective management of performance of all staff, has significantly improved the quality of teaching and assessment systems to track pupils' progress.
- The governing body challenges the work of the school, and uses performance management effectively to oversee improvements.
- Leaders have worked well with the local authority to ensure good improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good leadership and governance show good capacity to further improve teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few lessons require improvement, and not enough are outstanding.
- There are occasional inconsistencies in teachers' use of pupils' prior attainment in planning activities to extend their thinking.
- In lessons, learning tasks are not always matched to the different needs of pupils.
- Pupils do not always know what they are expected to achieve or how well they have done in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons, five of which were joint observations with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Discussions took place with two groups of pupils, meetings were held with four members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, four parents and carers and staff. Inspectors also took account of 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's survey of parents and carers. Telephone discussions took place with staff from four mainstream primary schools where children are dual registered, and three parents and carers.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school development plan, records of incidents and safeguarding policies, samples of pupils' work and data on pupils' progress over time.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mary Geddes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Warren School provides education for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Just over a third of pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Most pupils have additional language and communication needs and the majority of these have autistic spectrum disorder. Most pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and a high proportion are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- There have been significant changes to the organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The Nursery is now a local authority assessment centre managed by the school, where children arrive to undergo statutory assessment. Children in the Nursery and Reception class are also dual registered with mainstream schools or independent providers.
- The senior leadership team has been re-organised with the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and a new leader for the recently established 14–19 provision.
- The school has recently been awarded Healthy School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and eliminate the few remaining areas where teaching requires improvement by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use the information about pupils' prior attainment to plan individual learning tasks which extend their thinking
 - consistently plan a range of learning tasks which are matched to pupils' different abilities and aptitudes
 - increase pupils' awareness of what they are expected to achieve at the beginning of the lesson and how well they have done by the end of the lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to the nature and complexity of their disabilities and special educational needs, pupils' attainment is low. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their low starting points as they move through the Nursery and Reception class because all adults work together to ensure that there are interesting and stimulating outdoor and indoor learning experiences which capture and stimulate children's imaginations.
- Pupils in all key stages make good progress as they move through the school because most teachers and support staff provide individualised learning activities matched closely to different learning needs. As a result, there are no significant differences in the progress of girls and boys or those with additional disabilities or special educational needs. School data on progress over time show that pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, those with profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with language and communication needs make similar progress to pupils with severe learning difficulties.
- Pupils receiving support through the pupil premium make equally good progress as others because additional support is provided based on good use of detailed information on prior learning to ensure that communication, reading and writing tasks are matched closely to their individual needs.
- Pupils make good progress in communication, language and literacy as a result of close work between the speech therapist, teachers and support staff, who consistently use signing, visual symbols, communication books, electronic switches and objects of reference.
- As they develop and improve their communication skills, pupils acquire good knowledge of letter sounds for reading and writing. As a result, pupils at Key Stages 1 to 3 make good progress in reading, particularly in using initial sounds and blending letter sounds to read new words.
- Pupils in the 14–19 provision make good progress in a wide range of accredited courses and in vocational skills. Students in the sixth form build on this good progress, developing skills for independence, which prepare them well for the next stage of their lives. This is because all staff provide free-choice activities with a well-conceived practical curriculum which students enjoy.
- In nearly all lessons and subjects during the inspection, pupils made good progress as they concentrated on their learning, listened carefully to staff and followed instructions. Pupils in Year 2 made good progress and enjoyed singing familiar songs and nursery rhymes to the teacher's guitar accompaniment. Pupils at Key Stage 2 made very good progress in designing and making models of mini-beasts and in literacy and numeracy which were well promoted by staff in an exceptionally well-planned lesson. At Key Stage 3, pupils with autistic spectrum disorder made good progress in sequencing numbers because all staff used well-chosen practical resources focusing effectively on the mathematical language to develop their understanding.
- Older pupils and students at post-16 with complex communication and language needs made outstanding progress in physical development because physical therapy was carefully built into this exceptionally well-planned lesson.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good and a significant proportion is outstanding because leaders have

focused since the last inspection on systematically improving teaching and learning. Key strengths of teaching include good use of well-chosen resources, particularly information and communication technology (ICT), signing and communication aids to stimulate learning and develop pupils' communication skills. Good promotion of literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects and good subject knowledge are further strengths in teaching.

- Most teachers make good use of information about pupils' prior learning to build on skills, knowledge and understanding, and carefully match learning tasks to pupils' different learning needs. Just occasionally, this is not the case. Where lessons require improvement, teachers do not always inform pupils what they are expected to achieve, nor do they review how well pupils have done by the end of the lesson.
- Teaching and support for pupils with more complex disabilities and special educational needs such as autistic spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties is good. This is because all staff work strongly as a team to implement strategies recommended on individual educational plans to ensure effective learning.
- Strong support from well-trained teaching assistants across the school makes a significant contribution to the quality of teaching in all lessons. Support staff consistently make good use of skilful signing, objects of reference, visual resources and communication aids, as well as promoting literacy and numeracy effectively to ensure pupils have full access to learning. As a result, all pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, those receiving the pupil premium with complex language and communication needs and students in the sixth form, make equally good progress.
- Staff teach reading skilfully, demonstrating good knowledge of teaching letter sounds for reading and spelling.
- Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Teachers build up pupils' self-esteem through consistent use of praise, encouragement and reward. Moral and social development is promoted through the many opportunities for sharing, turn-taking and through lesson topics such as avoiding dangerous situations and the safe use of the internet. Cultural development is promoted through make-believe visits to different countries on the 'magic carpet' where pupils increase their awareness of different foods, costumes and cultural traditions from around the world.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

- Pupils, including those with the most challenging behaviours due to their severe autism, respond well to the consistent management of behaviour by all staff. In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour and safety are good. They move sensibly along corridors, play safely together outside and have positive attitudes in lessons as they focus on their learning. They adopt safe practices in avoiding potential hazards and in using mobile phones and the internet safely.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception class stay safe because staff ensure that children's welfare and safety requirements are met by providing good levels of supervision in staff-directed and free-choice activities.
- Parents and carers who completed the online questionnaires, those who completed the school's survey and those who met the inspectors mostly agree that behaviour is good and that their children stay safe. Pupils also said that behaviour and safety are good and that bullying is rare. Pupils have a developing awareness of different types of prejudice-based bullying.

- Pupils throughout the school and students in the sixth form are polite and courteous to visitors; they listen to and respect adults.
- Attendance is above average as a result of good promotion and monitoring of attendance. Most pupils, who are transported to school arrive punctually to lessons.

The leadership and management is good

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership in building a shared vision and drive for continuous improvement among all staff.
- Leaders use the management of performance of all staff together with the information gathered from the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and the systematic use of accurate self-evaluation, to tackle weaknesses in teaching, and improve all aspects of provision.
- Clear priorities are set for improvement in the school development plan, and these are reflected in the performance management objectives of all staff, including teaching assistants. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching, the curriculum and in assessment systems to track pupils' progress.
- Leaders ensure safeguarding requirements are met. Vetting procedures for staff and visitors are rigorous, all training is up to date and pupils benefit from high levels of supervision to ensure their safety and well-being.
- The curriculum is now more relevant to pupils needs than at the last inspection as a result of the inclusion of land-based studies, where, for example, pupils learn about their local area and make willow baskets, and conserve pathways and fences. The curriculum also includes construction courses and new local work experience opportunities enabling older pupils and students to benefit from a range of vocational learning opportunities. At each key stage, there are well-conceived visits to places of interest to stimulate enjoyment and enrich pupils' experiences. These have included a visit to a local farm, a day trip to France, sensory visits for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, visits to museums and pond dipping.
- Good leadership has also ensured that teaching and the curriculum promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, through first-hand experiences, such as visits by a Zulu and Masai warriors, and opportunities for pupils to dress in the war bonnets and beaded Native American costumes they have made.
- Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in the school, which goes out of its way to develop pupils' appreciation of and respect for diversity. Leaders have ensured that there are no significant differences in the achievements of any group of pupils. All pupils are included in all the school offers, ensuring that equality is promoted well throughout the school.
- The local authority provides good support in monitoring the school's overall effectiveness and in challenging it to further improve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - provides good oversight for the school's work because the governing body is fully involved in evaluating its strengths and weaknesses
 - is able to assess the impact of leadership on pupils' learning and well-being because governors visit the school as often as they can

- ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including for safeguarding
- has set clear performance management targets for the headteacher, in good collaboration with the local authority and based on the school's priorities for development.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124905
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	402297

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Woodrow
Headteacher	Dee Moxon
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2009
Telephone number	01502 561893
Fax number	01502 561893
Email address	ad.warren.s@talk21.com

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