

St Peter's CofE VC Primary School, Easton

Marlingford Road, Easton, Norwich, NR9 5AD

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress from their different starting points. Progress is equally strong in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The youngest children have an excellent start to their schooling in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This first year prepares them exceptionally well for their future schooling.
- The school is very effective in supporting pupils with disabilities or special educational needs, particularly those entitled to free school meals and those of a Gypsy, Romany or Traveller heritage.
- Teachers provide pupils with an excellent range of interesting and inspiring activities to extend their learning.
- Teachers do not always focus on the accuracy of pupils' presentation, punctuation and spelling to improve their writing and do not always provide time for pupils to respond to any marking comments.
- Pupils have exemplary attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy school, behave outstandingly well and look after each other very well.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have led the school well into its federation with two other schools. Their work is often used more widely as an example of excellent practice.
- The governing body has an outstanding grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is a clear focus on maintaining the school's strong Christian ethos.
- Leaders ensure all available finance is used very effectively and that the quality of the teachers' work is suitably evaluated and teaching quality improved to further raise standards and to ensure staff are rewarded appropriately.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons or parts of lessons.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence including the school's documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, and the school's data for tracking pupils' progress. He evaluated the quality of work in pupils' books. The inspector also listened to pupils' read and talked to them about their books.
- The inspector had meetings with the headteacher, staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority, Traveller Education Service and the diocese.
- The inspector conducted joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspector took into account parents' responses to the school's own surveys and 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of a hard federation, sharing one headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body, with two other small Church of England schools.
- An average proportion of pupils 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.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The majority of the pupils are White British but a significant proportion are of Gypsy, Romany or Traveller heritage.
- There is a breakfast club and pre-school provision on the school site. These are privately run, and inspected separately.
- In 2012 the school met the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' writing by focusing the teaching more on the accuracy of pupils' presentation, punctuation and spelling.
- Give pupils more consistent and regular opportunities to respond to the comments made when teachers' mark their work and feedback to them on how they can improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Most children start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age. Many have social and emotional development and communication and language skills that are well below those expected. The vast majority make outstanding progress over time and reach levels above those expected by the time that they leave the school.
- Pupils make excellent progress in reading. The school has an effective system for teaching early reading skills and pupils read widely. Those who find reading difficult are developing good skills in linking sounds and letters and this helps them read words that they have not met before. The excellent non-fiction resources, especially in the library, support pupils' strong research skills.
- The school has had a recent focus on writing as it recognised standards were not high enough in the past. This has had a very positive impact, especially on boys' writing which is now often as good as that of the girls. The content of much of the work is imaginative and pupils are developing an excellent breadth of vocabulary. Even so, more remains to be done to improve the accuracy of their writing, the neatness and style of presentation, and punctuation and spelling.
- Progress in mathematics is excellent and pupils reach above average levels of attainment by Year 6. In 2012, almost half of the pupils in Year 6 reached a whole National Curriculum level above that expected. Pupils develop very good knowledge and understanding, partly because teachers try to link their work to real life. This happened, for example, in Years 3 and 4 where pupils solved some challenging problems using money in a real life context.
- High quality work is evident in a range of subjects, especially art and design. This work is often linked to other subjects, such as the current 'Under the sea' theme. Pupils throughout the school are learning a wide range of new skills through this topic. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils are developing an opera performance with actors and musicians from a local theatre. This work has a positive impact on the pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium and those who are disabled or have special educational needs make progress as outstanding as that of their peers. The school tracks this carefully so any underachievement can be quickly addressed through well-targeted one-to-one and small group support. The pupils from Gypsy, Romany or Traveller backgrounds also make excellent progress when they attend regularly. The school receives good support from the Traveller Service which forms an important part of the overall outstanding provision.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The outstanding teaching is the result of high quality leadership with a clear focus on the importance of strong classroom practice. Lessons are well planned and resourced and teachers ensure that pupils clearly understand what is expected of them. Teaching is outstanding, for example, when teachers use the pupils' suggestions for ways to assess how successful their learning has been.
- Since the last inspection the teachers have worked hard to improve their marking of work so that it provides children with more useful feedback. However, the opportunities for pupils to respond to this and to show how well they have taken the guidance on board are too limited. When it does happen pupils show that they accept advice and learn from it.

- The teachers are very well supported by excellent teaching assistants who often take the lead on some activities, and work with the more able as well as those who find learning more difficult. For example, a teaching assistant runs a session for less able readers to help them catch up and the data shows that they make excellent progress. Another assistant runs a scheme for more able mathematicians and this has had an outstanding impact by providing a very high level of challenge for those pupils enabling them to learn at a fast rate. Teaching assistants also organise and run a regular 'reading café' which provides excellent opportunities for parents and carers to work alongside their children to further improve individuals' reading skills.
- A feature of the strongest teaching is the practical nature of many of the tasks. These appeal to pupils who are motivated by more practical activities, particularly boys. For example, Year 4 pupils created a large pictogram on the playground before turning the data into bar graphs back in the classroom. Year 5 and 6 pupils learned about three-dimensional shapes by making a net for a triangular pyramid to hold the potion in the story being used as part of the 'Under the sea' topic. These links made the learning more enjoyable and involve all pupils in very challenging tasks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school, in lessons and at break and lunchtimes, is exceptionally good. They are lively but excited by their learning and take a full part in all activities. Pupils clearly enjoy being at school and they enjoy the wide range of after-school activities teachers and teaching assistants provide for them, especially the crafty cooking sessions.
- All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond to them well. Pupils say there is no bullying at the school. The school ensures they are very well-informed about different forms of bullying including cyber-bullying. They love taking responsibility and the 'team leaders' have a very positive impact on relationships and especially how well the youngest children are cared for. The school council often take the lead when raising money for charities or for an African child that the school supports.
- Attendance is affected by the absence of individuals who spend a large part of each year travelling. Even so, the school ensures the attendance of all others is above average and that the Travellers have work packs to take with them. They are welcomed back into the school on their return and quickly settle. The relationship the school has built up with Traveller families over time is a real strength and the pupils from different backgrounds all get on very well together.
- Parents and carers say that their children are safe and are happy at school. This is supported by the comments of the pupils themselves. They told the inspector 'Everyone is kind to everyone.' This is particularly the case for pupils with disabilities who are included fully in the life of the school, not just by staff but by the pupils as well.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and her senior staff provide the school with outstanding leadership. They have an excellent grasp on the day-to-day running of the school and have a vision that supports continuous improvement and lacks complacency.

- The leadership of teaching is excellent and has had a very positive impact on rapidly improving pupils' achievement. Expertise is sought from outside when required, and also spread across the school, using staff from all three schools in the federation to successfully raise standards. The success of the federation is reflected in the way the headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body are used to talk to other schools considering the process. Other senior staff are also regularly asked to share their expertise with other schools.
 - The local authority has supported the school well through the federation process. It has provided effective professional development when requested and has light-touch oversight nowadays. The diocesan support has also been most effective during the federation process and they are rightly proud of the outcome.
 - Pupil premium funding has been used outstandingly well and those pupils who benefit from additional resources make at least as good, and often better, progress than their peers. This is because the money has been expertly targeted at appropriate interventions, staffing and resources, and the impact is monitored closely. This excellent provision ensures these pupils are rapidly narrowing any gaps in their attainment against all pupils' nationally.
 - Performance management is used very effectively to improve teaching and identify where teachers need extra support or training, or would benefit from a different experience, such as working with a different age group. The school promotes equality of opportunity outstandingly well and ensures there is no discrimination or exclusion of any pupils from school activities.
 - The school has a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. This is reflected in the action plans drawn up to ensure continual improvement, especially in literacy and numeracy. The work in different subjects provided for pupils is outstanding and provides pupils with an excellent framework for their learning. This is enriched through a wide range of visits, visitors and the close links with the other schools in the federation. This enables the school to get better value for money on, for example, residential visits, and also provides excellent opportunities for pupils to meet and work with a wider range of others than would otherwise be the case.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has a large number of outstanding aspects. The expertise of individual governors is developed well and used very effectively to drive improvement; this is especially the case for those with a financial or educational background. The governing body worked hard and successfully to make the federation of the three schools a success. They are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the local issues likely to arise in the near future. The governing body ensure the pupil premium funding is well spent and they check on the outcomes of this. They also effectively oversee performance management, especially of the headteacher, and successfully monitor the work of the school through a range of activities undertaken jointly with the teaching staff.
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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	121034
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	402812

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Blathwayt
Headteacher	Christine Livings
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2008
Telephone number	01603 880553
Fax number	01603 880837
Email address	head@easton-st-peters.norfolk.sch.uk

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