

# St Mary's Community Primary School, Beetley

Elmham Road, Beetley, Dereham, NR20 4BW

**Inspection dates** 22–23 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement is not consistently good throughout the school. Pupils' progress slows in Reception and in Year 3.
- Teaching is not consistently good. While there is some outstanding teaching, in some classes the work is not sufficiently demanding, especially for more-able pupils.
- Some pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length, and not enough is done to improve pupils' reading skills, especially in Key Stage 2.
- The Reception classroom and outdoor area do not contain enough interesting things for children to see and do.
- Governors are not confident in their role of supporting the school's leadership.
- The school's data systems are not comprehensive enough to give leaders and managers the information they need about how well groups and individuals are doing.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly won the support and respect of the school community, and the changes she has brought in to improve teaching and raise standards are already having a positive impact.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 4, 5 and 6, where the strongest teaching occurs.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and say they feel safe at school.
- Attendance is above average and continuing to rise.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress as a result of the additional support they receive.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons or parts of lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher. All teachers and support staff in school were seen working with the pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, attended assemblies, and looked closely at examples of pupils' work with the headteacher and senior teacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, local authority reports on the school, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, class teachers, governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke individually with several parents and carers during the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors also considered the 27 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

James McAtear

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- A job share operates in Year 3. Only one of the teachers was observed during the inspection.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2012. She is the sixth headteacher or acting headteacher to lead the school in the past six years.
- There is a before- and after-school club on the school site, but it is not run by the governors and is inspected separately.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - providing demanding work for all pupils, but especially the more-able pupils
  - using questioning more effectively to extend pupils' learning
  - making sure that marking clearly shows pupils how to improve their work and individual targets help them to move on in their learning.
- Ensure pupils make consistently good progress across the whole school by:
  - giving pupils regular opportunities to write at length, paying careful attention to their handwriting
  - increasing the amount of time pupils have to read every day in literacy lessons and in other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2
  - creating stimulating experiences for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, both indoors and outdoors, so that it is an invigorating place for them to learn.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - helping governors to develop their roles, particularly in supporting and strengthening school leadership and helping them to focus on the key priorities of the school for improvement
  - refining data systems so that leaders and managers can easily access the information they need about how well individuals and groups of pupils are doing, in particular disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children join the school with skills and abilities generally in line with those expected. Children do not make consistently good progress in Reception, particularly in reading and writing because the range of activities provided for them is too narrow and because there are not enough stimulating things for them to do.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because teaching is consistently good or better and they are given a solid grounding in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and communication. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is variable. They make good progress in Years 4, 5 and 6, but progress requires improvement in Year 3. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve vary, particularly in how much they should write and in the quality of their handwriting.
- Attainment in Year 6 in 2012 was above average in English and average in mathematics. This group of pupils made particularly good progress in writing, all reaching at least the expected level for their age, because of the support they received.
- Reading standards are improving. Pupils' results were below average in the national phonics test for Year 1 this year. Changes in the ways pupils are taught about the links between letters and sounds are now leading to better reading standards for younger pupils. Until recently, reading was not given enough emphasis in Key Stage 2 and pupils did not routinely take books home to read. This, too, is improving and adults now hear pupils read regularly every week. This is increasing pupils' interest in and enjoyment of books so that they can start to talk about the authors they like to read.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. While teaching assistants often make a valuable contribution to individual pupils' learning, their progress as a group is not sufficiently checked to ensure it is good, especially in numeracy.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium made good progress in 2012 because the additional money was well spent on supporting them in special groups tailored to their needs.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good in all classes. Teachers ask questions to check that pupils understand the work, but do not consistently probe their thinking by asking more demanding questions. More-able pupils in particular are not always given difficult enough work to do.
- In the best lessons, which occur in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 4, 5 and 6, teachers use support staff well to work with individuals and groups and carefully plan work that is sufficiently demanding for all pupils, including the most able. They regularly check how pupils are responding to the tasks and make adjustments to the lesson accordingly. In this way they ensure that the pace of learning does not slow down.
- In an outstanding lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils wrote postcards to pre-school children explaining how they could be a good friend. The more-able pupils added a connective and a second idea. Pupils read their postcards to a learning partner, who gave them their full attention

and then explained to the teacher what they had told them. This not only developed pupils' writing skills extremely well, but also meant they listened to one another and were able to report back what they had learnt.

- However, other teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. In some classes pupils do not do enough writing at length and their handwriting is not neat enough. Marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work and pupils do not have individual targets to help them move to the next level of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is stronger in literacy than it is in mathematics. Pupils receive more support in their reading and writing, and the individual help from teaching assistants is often focused and effective. Where pupils have difficulties controlling their emotions, support staff are highly skilful at helping them to stay calm so that learning is not disrupted.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are taught well and benefit from the additional teaching time and small-group support the funding brings. This has resulted in gaps in attainment closing with other pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and usually work hard in lessons. Where the teacher sets a high level of challenge, pupils rise to meet it. Just occasionally, when teaching does not interest them so much, they become distracted and the pace of learning slows.
  - Behaviour is good. As one pupil put it, 'We're such a friendly bunch anyway!' Parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) think pupils generally behave well.
  - Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Pupils know what is expected of them and support one another in behaving well.
  - The recently introduced 'friendship stop' in the playground has been welcomed by pupils. The older pupils who manage it make sure that nobody is without a playmate and that any little squabbles are resolved amicably.
  - Pupils say that there is no bullying and are confident that if they did have any concerns they would be dealt with effectively by staff. They have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take, for example racist bullying and name-calling.
  - Pupils say they feel safe at school, a view echoed by parents. Pupils know all about keeping safe and how to avoid dangerous situations, for example when using the internet.
  - Pupils take their responsibilities seriously as 'zone buddies' in the playground and as members of the school council. They particularly enjoy being entrusted with the key to the back gate to make sure that the site is secure when the school is running.
  - Attendance is continuing to rise and was above average last year, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school.
-

**The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The school has been through a lengthy period of uncertainty, with a succession of headteachers and acting headteachers, none of whom has stayed for long. This is partly due to the way the governing body operates. Governors are uncertain about their roles and responsibilities, particularly in how to support and strengthen school leadership. The failure to ensure settled leadership has had a destabilising effect on the school over time.
  - The new headteacher has brought light and life to the school, and all staff have rallied round her leadership. She has quickly identified the school's strengths and key priorities for improvement, and has made positive changes already, for example to the way reading is taught.
  - The headteacher holds staff fully to account for how well pupils are doing. She has quickly identified strengths and areas to develop in teaching and given clear guidance to teachers about how to improve their practice, providing training where necessary to hone their skills. This is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, and resulting in more teaching that is good or better.
  - The school has not been able to access enough information on pupils' performance to allow it to measure the progress of individuals and groups of pupils, such as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This has prevented it from making well-informed decisions about where support should be targeted, because staff have not known exactly how well pupils are doing.
  - Teachers are linking subjects together to make learning interesting and meaningful for pupils, and take advantage of visits, such as to nearby rural life museum for a 'Victorian murder mystery', and visitors to the school to enrich their experiences. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
  - The school ensures that all pupils are treated equally and that discrimination is not tolerated. It fosters good relations with parents and outside agencies.
  - The local authority has provided valuable support to the school and its leaders over time.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibilities, and are keen to access high-quality professional training to enable them to support the new headteacher and other leaders appropriately. Until recently, the governing body has not focused sufficiently on how well the school is improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement. Like other leaders, they have been constrained in their knowledge of performance data by limitations in the tracking systems, although this is being resolved. They do not yet have a clear understanding of how the school is doing in relation to other similar schools. Governors understand how performance management works and its links to pay progression and promotion. They know how pupil premium money is being spent, but are not sure about the impact it has had on outcomes for pupils. They ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet current national requirements.
-

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121011
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	401988

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	171
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lorna Cottingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jessica Balado
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 860114
<b>Fax number</b>	01362 860114
<b>Email address</b>	office@st-marysbeetley.norfolk.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

