

# Sprowston Junior School

Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8EW

**Inspection dates** 22–23 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils enjoy school, work hard and make good progress. They achieve particularly well in mathematics because of the good teaching of number skills that gives pupils confidence to tackle all aspects of the subject.
- Pupils behave well and feel free from any form of bullying. They say this is a happy school where they feel safe.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and carers who value highly the way the school teaches and cares for their children.
- Pupils take responsibility and leave as mature individuals, well prepared for the future.
- Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils make good progress throughout the school. Teachers plan lessons skilfully to make sure that pupils of all ability make equally good progress.
- Teachers use technology very well to illustrate their teaching and this makes learning fun for pupils.
- The headteacher and senior staff work well together to build on the school's strengths and rectify weaknesses. The school runs smoothly, and staff work well as a team to make improvements.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing, particularly by boys, is not as fast as in reading and mathematics.
- Boys have very good ideas for their writing, but are slower than girls to put pen to paper and often write less.
- School leaders do not give teachers sufficient guidance following observations of their lessons on how they could be even better.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 36 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diana Songer-Hudgell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- An average proportion of the 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.
- Compared with most schools, very few of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported at school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has recently achieved the Eco Award, International School Award and Healthy Schools status.

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

- By July 2013, raise pupils' attainment in writing by teachers routinely:
  - ensuring that boys apply themselves more quickly to new writing tasks.
  - providing writing tasks that motivate boys as much as girls
  - making the most of boys' good ideas for writing by ensuring they answer as many questions in class discussions as girls
  - having higher expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing in all subjects.
- School leaders should improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by giving teachers clearer guidance on how the learning in lessons they have observed could have been better.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from starting points that are a little above average. Pupils, as well as all those parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaire, feel they make good progress at school. Attainment is improving year-by-year and is above average in English and very high in mathematics.
- Progress in reading is very good because pupils enjoy many opportunities to read widely, both at home and school. Younger pupils become increasingly skilled at building sounds into words and this gives them confidence to tackle challenging texts. By Year 6, many pupils are adept at skimming articles in books and on computers to gain information quickly.
- Pupils choose words carefully to make their writing interesting for the reader. For example, their accounts of their day out at a fairground gave a vivid picture of their experiences. Writing in subjects other than English, however, is sometimes brief and poorly punctuated.
- Girls tend to make a faster start at writing, and sometimes have written half a paragraph before boys have finished the title. While boys have good ideas for their stories, they allow the more assertive girls to answer the large majority of questions in class discussions.
- Boys' written work is better when the task excites them. For example, younger ones achieved very well when explaining how they would care for a baby dragon that had hatched from an egg in their garden.
- In mathematics, pupils calculate quickly in their heads, and use their skills well to solve problems such as the scores achieved throwing darts at a board. Their skills improve further by using their mathematics in all subjects, as was seen when they made graphs of changes in temperature in science.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Those with reading difficulties do particularly well because they gain the skills and confidence to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. The school uses the funds well to support these pupils, including providing extra reading sessions, individual teaching and funds to enjoy music lessons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from good support and achieve well, particularly in their speaking and listening skills. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 in all subjects is as high as others in school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers ensure that pupils understand what learning is expected and check throughout on their progress towards these goals. This helps teachers assess pupils' learning and enables them support those who are struggling.
- The teaching of reading skills is very effective. Pupils learn how to tackle unfamiliar words and

have extensive opportunities to read in all subjects.

- Teachers are good at using technology to help pupils learn. For example, in one class pupils found calculating the area of shapes difficult. They made good progress when the teacher showed them on the interactive whiteboard how to count the length and width of different shapes and multiply them together.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is very good. Teachers make the rules clear and pupils make the best of their time in lessons.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress rigorously and provide useful comments in their marking that helps them do better next time. Pupils enjoy good opportunities to assess their own work, which gives them a clear understanding of their achievements.
- Teachers ask pupils searching questions to make them think hard about subjects. However, in some lessons, particularly in writing, they allow the girls to provide most of the answers and boys are happy to let them.
- Teachers plan well to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They plan work that is challenging yet achievable and make good use of teaching assistants to support those who need it. Teachers make a point of ensuring these pupils answer questions in whole class sessions, and this helps them grow in confidence.
- Expectations of pupils are high, so those of different abilities make good progress. However, while pupils are given many opportunities to use their skills in reading and mathematics in all subjects, teachers sometimes accept writing in the topic work that is of a lower standard to that in their English books.

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

- Pupils behave well and disruptions in lessons are uncommon. Teachers use a 'traffic light' system effectively to warn those who transgress the rules, and pupils appreciate the way teachers use it consistently.
- Pupils arrive punctually and attendance rates are above the national average. The school works effectively with parents and carers to emphasise the importance of regular attendance, and absence rates have dropped over the last three years.
- Pupils show a very good awareness of all forms of bullying and know that adults handle any instances of aggressive behaviour well. Records show that acts of bullying and unacceptable behaviour are decreasing year by year.
- Pupils are courteous and treat adults and one another with respect. They listen carefully to one another in discussions and accept that not all share their own opinions.
- Pupils develop a good awareness of danger and, for example, speak knowledgeably about the potential dangers of using the internet without adequate adult supervision.
- They take responsibility well, and enjoy representing the views of others as members of the

school council and eco-committee. Pupils show a very good awareness of the need to care for the environment, for example compiling informative graphs on the use and potential wastage of electricity in their school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher leads well with high expectations of all members of the school community. She is supported well by other leaders who share her high ambitions for the school's future.
- School leaders track the progress of pupils rigorously and make effective provision for those falling behind. This has helped raise attainment since the last inspection, particularly in reading and mathematics, and shows how well the school is set to do even better.
- School leaders use rigorous systems to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, with regular observations of lessons. However, they do not always leave teachers with targets following these observations to inform them of how 'good' lessons could have been even better.
- In the longer term, annual reviews of teachers' performance illustrate clearly what they have achieved, and set them challenging goals for the year ahead. The leaders and governing body make effective use of these reviews to make decisions about teachers' pay and promotion to higher scales.
- The leaders' commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils is evident in their identification and support of underachieving groups. For example, recognising the slow progress by some boys in writing, the school has started to introduce themes that capture their imagination and this has begun to improve their achievements.
- The leaders make good use of local schools to provide joint, cost-effective training, based on the school's current needs. This has been particularly helpful in developing the roles of senior staff and subject leaders since the last inspection.
- Safeguarding systems are robust and meet requirements. These are reviewed regularly by the leaders and the governing body, and are valued highly by pupils and parents and carers.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Their comments to inspectors and responses to the on-line questionnaires were wholly positive, particularly in terms of the quality of teaching, the school's leadership and their children's progress.
- Pupils find the curricular and extra-curricular activities provided for them interesting, and they particularly value the many visits that bring subjects to life. As well as providing a strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills, the school ensures that pupils develop their talents in music and enjoy opportunities to learn two foreign languages.
- The good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is illustrated by the many opportunities to reflect on their world. For example, their work on the hardships faced by people in the Second World War showed a good awareness of how it must have felt to be so afraid. The good teaching about different religions gives pupils a clear understanding of the diverse cultures in this country and beyond.
- The school has made good use of the expertise from the local authority to raise the quality of

teaching and learning. This support is less evident now that the school has improved so much.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good awareness of the school’s effectiveness, including its performance compared with other schools, gained through regular visits and meetings with the headteacher and subject leaders. The governing body has the skills gained through good training to challenge the leaders and take a full part in school improvement. They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning and are fully involved in discussions relating to teachers’ pay. Governors have a thorough awareness of the finances, and ensure the school gets good value from its spending. They know how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent, why it is allocated in this way and the impact it has on pupils’ academic and personal 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120852
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	401972

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	211
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pete Wilde
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janine Wye
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 425150
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