

# Pakefield

Kilbourn Road, Pakefield, Lowestoft, NR33 7DS

## Inspection dates

14–15 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- This new school has established itself successfully and firmly as a viable option for secondary education in the local area. Staff and pupils are very proud of their school.
- Pupils are making good progress and achieving well because they are taught well and their attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy the well-developed practical tasks provided in most lessons to help them learn.
- Teaching assistants provide skilled support to individual and small groups of pupils, often those who have additional needs or are at risk of falling behind, to ensure they move forward in their learning.
- Pupils behave well and are particularly attentive and cooperative in lessons.
- Pupils are well looked after and cared for. Hence they feel safe at school and also learn about how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He and his deputy set a very positive tone to the work of the school while expecting only the best from all. The strong drive for improvement means teaching is getting better and better.
- Staff have a very clear sense of purpose and are equally ambitious for the school and their pupils.
- The staff and governors work together in strong partnership to ensure that the school is the best that it can be. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's work and how well it is performing.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- On occasions work in lessons is a little too easy, especially for the more-able pupils.
- While marking is usually thorough, pupils do not routinely respond to teachers' comments or suggestions for improvement.
- Sometimes, pupils work too slowly or slow down if given too long to complete a task.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are regular and thorough, but do not always focus enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, and many of these were seen together with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects such as the effectiveness of support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The inspection team held meetings with three groups of pupils. They also spoke to pupils informally at lunch and break times.
- The team held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, and governors, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector met with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 65 responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, in making their judgements. They also analysed 44 Ofsted questionnaires returned by staff.
- The team looked closely at a range of documentation, including information on students' performance, the school's own analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, improvement plans, safeguarding and behaviour policies, and records and documents relating to the targets set for teachers to improve their work.

## Inspection team

Gulshanbir Kayembe, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Susan Smith	Additional Inspector
Rachel Hobson	Additional Inspector
Heather Weston	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is a new secondary school. It was formed after the reorganisation of local schools from a system with first, middle and high schools to just primary and secondary schools. Currently the school has pupils in Years 7 to 9 only.
- The first pupils joined in September 2011, in Years 7 and Year 8. Another Year 7 group joined in September 2012.
- Currently the school is smaller overall than other secondary schools, but the number of pupils in each year group is similar to most secondary schools.
- The large majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. While there is a small minority of pupils from a range of other ethnic backgrounds, none are beginners in English.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This extra government funding is given to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority or pupils from families where a parent serves in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school makes arrangements for a very small number of pupils to attend Harbour Pupil Referral Unit in order to access support for social, emotional and behavioural needs. A small group of pupils in Year 9 are on 'taster' courses in a range of work-related areas, such as hairdressing and brick laying, at the North Suffolk Skills Academy. They will choose one of these courses at the start of Year 10 to follow through to accreditation.

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

- Improve the teaching to outstanding and raise achievement further by:
  - making sure that the work set in all lessons is at the right level of difficulty for all pupils in the class, and in particular is sufficiently challenging for more-able pupils
  - ensuring that pupils are not given too long to work on a task, or expected to listen for too long while teachers explain the work
  - giving pupils the time and encouragement to respond to teachers' written comments, questions and suggestions when their work is marked, and following up their responses.
- Ensure that when lessons are observed by senior or middle leaders, they focus on evaluating the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning and progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils begin school with attainment that is below average, and more so in relation to their literacy than their numeracy skills. They make good progress across a wide range of subjects and by Year 9 most have caught up with, and many have exceeded, the standards of work expected for their age.
- The school's assessment data and the work in pupils' books indicate that Year 9 pupils are on track to attain standards that are in line with national expectations in English, and above expectations in mathematics and science.
- Less-able pupils are making strong progress. This is due to the extra individual support they receive, and the very effective support given by teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are achieving well.
- More-able pupils do not make as much progress as less-able pupils, although their progress is nonetheless generally good. This is partly due to how their needs are assessed. For example, the assessment tasks they are given do not always enable them to demonstrate higher-level skills. The school is addressing this issue. However, the progress of more-able pupils is also slower at times because they are not always given work in lessons that is demanding enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are carefully assessed, and individual programmes of support are provided to support their learning. Teaching assistants are skilled in working with these groups, and use probing questions and practical resources well to promote their progress. Most of the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making good progress across the curriculum. For the few whose progress is slower, this is due to attendance issues which the school is actively tackling.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding are carefully tracked by the school and governors. They make particularly good progress in their learning because of the range of additional support provided for them, including one-to-one tuition, literacy catch-up sessions, and mentoring. The summer school attended by Year 7 pupils who were eligible for free school meals before they started at the school has had a very positive impact on their learning, and they are making very good progress in literacy and numeracy. By Year 9, pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are attaining as well as others.
- A key factor in the progress made by pupils is the way in which the school has focused on establishing a strong foundation in key skills, particularly literacy but also numeracy. For example, there are one-to-one reading sessions for pupils who are less confident readers, and a strong focus on learning tables and basic arithmetic skills means that pupils are able to cope well with the work they are given in lessons and so make good progress.
- Pupils have good opportunities to develop their writing skills in different subjects, and to develop their extended writing and ability to explain their ideas and thinking in written work. Numeracy and information and communication technology skills are also used well in different subjects. Pupils were full of praise about the technology they use in music, for example.
- Pupils' achievements in other subjects are equally good. In science, the good focus on investigative and experimental work makes it both a popular subject where pupils make rapid strides in their learning, especially in Years 7 and 8. Art work around the school is vibrant and pupils are very enthusiastic about the work they do in art and music. In physical education, the

teaching is strong and pupils' performance in local matches is outstanding. For example, the school has won 72 out of 79 fixtures this year.

- The small group of pupils attending the taster courses at the North Suffolk Skills Academy are benefiting from the experience and gaining a good understanding of the range of different work-related options open to them. They are keen to begin their work-related studies in Year 10 and recognise the importance of continuing of literacy and numeracy skills in the workplace. Consequently, they are working hard to develop a good foundation in these skills.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is typically good, and an increasing amount is outstanding. Strong relationships help to promote a very positive climate for learning. Pupils cooperate very well with teachers in lessons, and with one another.
  - Teachers plan clear learning outcomes which they share with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. The link between previous learning and what is planned in the next lesson is strong.
  - In most lessons, practical tasks and group work enable pupils to learn through active engagement and involvement, and by bouncing ideas off one another. Occasionally, however, teachers spend too long explaining the work or a key point rather than letting pupils develop understanding by doing. This slows the pace of their learning.
  - The pace of learning also slows at times when pupils are given too long to complete a task. However, most teachers make good use of the 100-minute lessons, giving pupils good opportunities to review their work as well as to practise key or new skills.
  - Teachers ask probing questions which help to develop pupils' understanding further. In the best lessons, teachers ask questions at different levels for different groups of pupils for example, harder questions are directed at more able pupils.
  - In most lessons, work is set at a level that is right for the large majority, if not all, of the pupils in the lesson. Sometimes, though, work is a little too easy for the more-able pupils or a little too hard for those who are less able. In most cases, support staff break down the work where it is difficult for any of the pupils, so that all are able to grasp new ideas and develop their skills further.
  - Marking is thorough and teachers usually give pupils constructive feedback on how to improve their work. Teachers often make very useful suggestions for pupils' next steps in learning or ask questions. However, pupils and teachers do not follow up these suggestions or questions or correct work where required. This results in missed opportunities to extend learning or to firm up key subject-related ideas.
  - Teachers make good use of support staff in lessons, and brief them well about what they expect pupils to learn during the lesson. The skilled and precise support provided by teaching assistants makes a big difference to the learning of the pupils they are working with.
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**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Good behaviour is a feature of all lessons, and at times behaviour in the classroom is outstanding. The level of engagement in lessons is strong. Pupils work together in pairs and groups well, and often very well, enjoying the debates and discussions they have.
- Pupils' overall attitudes to learning are very positive. They enjoy the successes they are having in their work and are keen to do well. Year 9 pupils are particularly serious about their studies as they have now begun work on GCSEs and other Key Stage 4 qualifications.
- Behaviour around the school is also generally good, but pupils can become a bit too boisterous during break times. The school has picked this up and is addressing it successfully for example through greater use of teaching staff for break and lunch time duties.
- Behaviour management is good. Procedures are clearly defined and used consistently well by staff. Pupils also have a clear understanding of the school's systems and expectations for behaviour. The very small number of pupils who attend the local pupil referral unit are responding well to the support they are receiving, and this is helping to modify their behaviour.
- Pupils have good understanding of the issues of bullying and what they should do if they become aware of any bullying in the school. Any bullying incidents which do occur are dealt with effectively and pupils are confident that this will be the case if they report any.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet. They feel safe at school, especially in relation to physical safety. They report some name-calling, which the school deals with. On the whole, pupils from a range of different backgrounds get on well with one another. The small number from minority ethnic backgrounds play a full part in the school community.
- The school is working hard on raising attendance. It is in line with national averages but the school would rightly like to see this improve further. This is a key part of the strategy to raise aspirations for what pupils can achieve.
- Most parents and carers agree that their children are happy and safe at school.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The school is now well established and its growth, as new groups join, is being exceptionally well managed. The headteacher has set high standards for staff and pupils to achieve, and has the full backing of staff and governors. Responses to the staff questionnaire were very positive about the school's work, and the support provided for their professional and personal development.
  - The performance of staff and pupils is thoroughly checked. Staff are held to account for the quality of their work but also given high-quality support and training to enable them to continuously improve. Equally, underperformance is not tolerated and dealt with firmly. The link between pay and performance is good, and targets for teachers' performance are linked very well to the progress of the pupils they teach.
  - Pupils' progress is tracked, individually and by different groups, to ensure that all are making
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equally good progress. The resulting information is also used very effectively to inform school priorities. Additional support is quickly provided where pupils' progress is not what it should be. A programme of subject reviews provides senior leaders and governors with further feedback on what is going well and where improvements may be needed.

- Much work has been carried out, including with external partners, other local schools and the local authority, to ensure that the school's assessments of pupils' progress and attainment are accurate given that the school has not yet had any external examinations. Hence the data on progress match the quality of work in pupils' books well.
  - The local authority provides good support to the school. It has worked with the headteacher and the interim governing body, for example, to get the school up and running and continues to support its development.
  - A good range of subjects enable pupils of all abilities to have a programme of study to suit their abilities, interests and needs. Year 9 pupils are already working on GCSEs and other, more work-related courses. This approach to a shorter Key Stage 3, only two years rather than three, is working well.
  - Strong links with local partners, including business and industry sectors, are extending pupils' experiences and options for their future lives exceptionally well. Together with a wide range of visits and visitors to the school, they promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors have established very effective mechanisms for finding out about the work of the school and how well it is performing. Their strong partnership with the school means they are involved in a wide range of activities. For example, individual governors participate in subject reviews. Consequently, they have an in-depth knowledge of the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils, including different groups of pupils, are making. Their oversight of the pupil premium funding is good and they are clear about the impact that it is having on pupils' achievement. Governors maintain a thorough oversight of safeguarding and ensure that all national requirements are met. Governors bring a wide range of skills and knowledge to their roles. This, coupled with their strong understanding of the school's data, enables them to challenge senior staff to perform even better.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136438
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	400318

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	536
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Foster
<b>Headteacher</b>	Perry Linsley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01502 530750
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