

West Row Community Primary School

Beeches Road, West Row, Bury St Edmunds, IP28 8NY

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children in the Reception class make excellent progress, especially in their personal development and in their speaking, reading and writing.
- Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 achieve well and make good progress. Their attainment by the end of Year 2 and in Year 6 is above average in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress accurately. They give pupils helpful advice about how to make their work even better.
- Pupils behave outstandingly well. They care for and help each other, and know how to stay safe.
- Good leadership from the headteacher, deputy headteacher and those in charge of subjects such as English and mathematics is making sure that standards are rising.
- The governing body is very supportive and knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing has improved and is broadly average, but lags behind reading and mathematics, especially for boys.
- Sometimes the work set for some of the most able pupils is not hard enough.
- A few pupils have not developed the skills they need to work on their own. These pupils sometimes rely too much on adult support, for example when they are expected to do writing on their own.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher on seven of the observations.
- Meetings were held with governors, the headteacher, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and discussed it with them.
- They took into account the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, its self-evaluation and plans for future improvements. Inspectors also looked at a range of documents and policies concerning school management and keeping pupils safe.
- The inspectors considered the 19 responses to the online survey (Parent View) and the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire. They also considered the results of the school's own recent survey of parents' views.

Inspection team

Godfrey Bancroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stuart Gray

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds is a little above average. The majority of these pupils have parents who are employed by the United States Air Force at a nearby base. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is low. A small number of pupils are from the Traveller community.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional government funding through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is low.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is high.
- The school has pupils who are currently educated through alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the pupils' attainment and progress.
- The local authority has reorganised education in the area, and this is the first year that the school has had pupils in Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in writing, especially for boys, by:
 - making full use of the recently introduced teaching methods to help pupils make their writing even better
 - guiding pupils in small steps so they can gradually produce longer pieces of writing
 - judging precisely when to reduce the support for writing, so that pupils can produce longer pieces of writing by themselves.
- Make sure that the work provided for the most able pupils is always hard enough.
- Ensure that the activities teachers plan in lessons include regular chances for pupils to think, work and learn for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start in the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are below the levels expected nationally for their age, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and in their mastery of communication and language. They make exceptional progress, and move up into Year 1 well prepared for their future learning.
- The pattern of good progress continues throughout the school. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has risen in each the last three years. It is above average for reading and mathematics, and broadly average in writing.
- The current Year 6 is the first that the school has ever had. When these pupils were in Year 2 standards were below average. Since then they have made good and in some cases exceptional progress, and are now on course to attain above average standards in reading and mathematics and broadly average standards in writing by the end of the year. Pupils in Year 5 are on course to attain above average standards in writing, as well as in reading and mathematics. Some of these pupils are almost a year in advance of the levels expected for their age.
- While attainment in writing lags behind that for reading and mathematics, it is steadily rising and more pupils are making or exceeding the progress expected of them. Better teaching methods, specifically designed to help pupils improve their writing, are contributing to these improvements.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. However, a small number of less-able younger pupils still struggle in their early reading with working out for themselves the sounds made by letters and words.
- Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs all make good progress. The same is true of the many pupils whose parents are from the United States of America. Pupils from the Traveller community also thrive, with some making outstanding progress.
- The small number of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium also do well. They are steadily catching up with pupils from other groups. They receive additional support from teachers and teaching assistants, and benefit from activities that are matched precisely to their learning needs. Test results and assessments show that the attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that of other groups. Pupils who are educated away from the school site also progress well.
- Pupils, who are new to the school, including those who speak English as an additional language, settle in quickly. They make rapid progress and soon catch up with the other pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Children in the Reception class receive excellent teaching and support from teaching assistants, enabling them to make outstanding progress in all areas of their learning.
- Teachers show high expectations that pupils will work hard and do their best, and this is exactly what the vast majority of pupils do. Lessons invariably capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. However, a small number of pupils sometimes struggle unless they have direct adult support and

tend to lose concentration in group activities unless teachers ask them direct questions, so their progress occasionally slows.

- Most lessons are planned with care and include work that is adapted for pupils at different ability levels. This usually means that the most able pupils are stretched by harder work than those who are less able, but this is not always the case.
- Teachers are skilful at ensuring that most pupils acquire the basic skills they need to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The revised methods for teaching reading and writing are paying dividends and standards are clearly rising. Even so, there are times when teachers do not give pupils the step-by-step guidance they need to help them produce longer pieces of writing. Similarly, teachers do not always pick the right time to reduce the level of guidance so that pupils can write longer pieces by themselves.
- Teaching assistants work with particularly good effect when helping small groups of pupils who need additional support. This applies especially to pupils supported by the pupil premium, pupils from the Traveller community and those who are new to the school, including those who speak English as an additional language. All these groups make good progress.
- Teachers track pupils' attainment and progress accurately, and use the resulting information well to identify the next step in learning for each pupil. Teachers and teaching assistants also check frequently that each pupil is sure about what they need to do to make their work even better.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around school. They are kind and supportive towards one another. They are well mannered and enjoy sharing moments of humour. They also greatly appreciate the help they receive from adults, responding with great enthusiasm to the praise and rewards they receive in recognition of their hard work and good progress. Pupils are also very aware of how to stay safe.
- Pupils are rightly proud of the excellent behaviour. There are very few concerns from parents about inappropriate behaviour, and pupils appreciate the exemplary behaviour of their classmates.
- The headteacher and governing body have worked very effectively to improve attendance. The broadly average level is a remarkable achievement, especially given the high number of pupils who join or leave in different year groups, or only stay for a relatively short period before moving on.
- Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. They know the particular needs of each pupil in great detail. On the rare occasions when there is a risk of inappropriate behaviour, staff invariably anticipate what might happen and intervene in a supportive way, encouraging pupils to concentrate on their work and introducing activities that help to regain their interest. The relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of what constitutes bullying in its various guises. They are careful to avoid making potentially hurtful comments or doing anything that might offend a classmate. They celebrate the heritage and traditions of pupils from different backgrounds or different parts of the world. Pupils are well informed about the hazards posed by misuse of the internet.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors all make a highly effective contribution to the leadership of the school. They are united in their ambition to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed, and that no pupil suffers through any form of discrimination.
- The school has a good track record, over the last three years, of improving attainment and progress for all groups of pupils. This is because its leaders have an accurate and realistic awareness of its strengths, but also carefully plan the right things to make sure it continues to improve. Typical of this are the recently introduced methods for improving pupils' reading and writing. These are already proving successful in raising standards, especially in writing. Precise and suitably challenging targets are set to measure the success of such initiatives through improvements in pupils' progress.
- The promotion of good teaching is supported well by school leaders. All staff have access to good opportunities for training to continually improve their skills. Senior staff provide good models of high-quality teaching when helping younger teachers and those new to the school to consider ways of making their teaching even better.
- Learning activities during lessons and after school, including a good range of educational visits, and good promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development make an effective contribution to pupils' academic and personal development and progress. The wide range of learning activities for children in the Reception class underpins their outstanding progress.
- Links with parents are strong. Parents have predominantly positive views about the quality of the school's work. The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress, and quickly contacts them if there are any problems or their child is at risk of falling behind in their work.
- The local authority has provided effective support in helping the school to bring about the notable improvements of the last three years, and rightly has confidence in the school's capacity to sustain these improvements.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governors are very supportive and know about all aspects of the school's work. They have a clear picture of the quality of education provided, and keep a close eye on the progress made in areas identified as needing improvement. They have good training to ensure that they keep up to date, and that newly appointed governors are supported as they grow into their role. They ensure that the arrangements to keep pupils safe meet current national requirements in full. Along with the headteacher, they play a full role in the performance management of staff, keeping a watchful eye to ensure that the work of any who are paid to undertake additional responsibilities is helping to increase pupils' achievement. The governors also have a good understanding of how resources are used to help pupils supported by the pupil premium, and the impact on their achievement. The governors are exceptionally skilful at ensuring that best value is gained from the financial resources available to the school. This is illustrated by the way they have relocated the library to make books more accessible for the pupils, and the detailed consideration given to the recent purchase of a new computers.

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	124542
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	402269

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richards Taylor-Balls
Headteacher	Geraldine Ciantar
Date of previous school inspection	January 2010
Telephone number	01638 715680
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